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VALOUR AND VISION: POEMS OF THE WAR, COLLECTED & EDITED BY JACQUELINE T. TROTTER

To T. H. W.,

The Spring of 1929!

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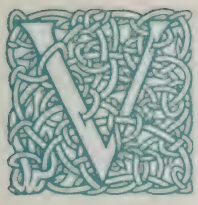

VALOUR & VISION

POEMS OF THE WAR
1914-18, COLLECTED & EDITED
BY JACQUELINE TROTTER

And some have made us songs
that shall not die, casting o'er
loves and battles else forgot
the halo of their immortality

LONDON: MARTIN HOPKINSON
AND COMPANY LTD. 14 HENRIETTA
STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C. 1923

The profits accruing to the Editor from the sale of this volume will be given to the Incorporated Soldiers & Sailors Help Society

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1923

First Edition published 1920
New and enlarged Edition, reset, 1923

Printed in Great Britain at the Chiswick Press of Charles Whittingham & Griggs (Printers), Ltd. 20 Tooks Court, Chancery Lane, London, E.C.4

TO

MY FATHER

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY

FOREWORD

THE intention of this Anthology is to present the poet as the historian, and to illustrate the different aspects and phases of the war by contemporary poetry. Since the historian is concerned with the thoughts and aspirations of a nation as well as with actual events, the poems chosen are not only descriptive of campaigns and battles, but in many cases expressive of moods and memories; some have served a passing purpose, others deal with thoughts and episodes that should never be forgotten.

Just as the war was not confined to the professional fighter but entered into the life of nearly every man, woman, and child, so this collection is not restricted to poets of unquestioned standing. Those five years aroused deep emotions in many; some, whose lips were touched, sang faultlessly; others lacked the art to express their feelings adequately, but they sang nevertheless. Wherever a poem appears to strike a true note or express a living emotion, it has not been rejected on account of failure in form, but has been allowed a place among others to which the highest literary standard can be applied.

The poems have been grouped chronologically in five sections corresponding to the five years of the war. A short and very informal list of the principal events of the year has been placed at the beginning of each section and is

merely intended to supply the context of the poems that follow.

The outbreak of war evoked a chorus of patriotic verse, but with some noble exceptions it gave us little of permanent value. These early poems are chiefly concerned with the glory and glamour of war, and many foretell a speedy victory. They appeal in glowing language to the righteousness of our cause and to the tradition set by our classical and national heroes. Towards the end of the year the tone is somewhat changed; victory is no longer imminent, the casualty lists tell their tale, and the struggle threatens to be long; the idea of service and sacrifice has taken the place of glory and self-confidence.

'Use me, England,
in thine hour of need,
Let thy ruling
rule me now in deed.'

The years 1915 and 1916 are marked by the advent of the Soldier Poets. Those were the days of battles that were almost victories, of plans that nearly succeeded. Neuve Chapelle, Gallipoli, Loos, the Somme, were all hailed as the beginning of the end. The end was not yet, but still hope ran high, and we looked forward to the great offensive which was to end the war.

But in 1917 a yet sterner note is struck; by this time many of the Soldier Poets have sung their last song. Failure after failure has made itself felt, the romance of war is gone, and there only remains the daily roll of missing and killed and the crowded hospitals; the thought

of a decisive victory is far from us. This theme runs through most of the poems of the period.

The gloom becomes even more intense at the opening of 1918; there are a few bright incidents such as the naval exploit at Zeebrugge, but they are only flashes in the ever-increasing darkness. Hopes, after years of battle and toil are baffled by the German advance; Paris and the Coast are once more in jeopardy. Then the tide turns and there follows that great October which brought the long-sought Victory.

Describing the events and emotions of those five years, the poets speak of the nature and consequences of war with a directness of sincerity and a passion that leave no room for comment. And I have made it my aim not to weaken this impression by admitting any poems which seem to labour a moral. Since the book speaks for our soldiers and poets, it begins on a note of Valour and ends with the voice of Vision.

Although the anthologist may in imagination roam the wide fields of literature in search of blossoms for his posy, yet—as a rule—the stern laws of copyright limit what he may gather. In this case the field is extensive and varied. It includes the files of the greater newspapers and magazines, and the 500 volumes of poetry on the shelves of the Library of the War Museum. But the gleaning has been free indeed, for authors and publishers have placed no restrictions upon my choice. With the notable exception of Mr. Masefield's '*August* 1914'—denied to the pages of any anthology—all the most famous war poems are to be found in this book.

FOREWORD

I take this opportunity of thanking all those who have kindly given permission for the inclusion of copyright poems; in every case the customary fees have been most generously waived in consideration of the object which this book is designed to help. A list of the authors, publishers, and owners of copyright to whom I am thus indebted is printed at the end of the volume.

I have also to thank the Editors of 'The Times,' 'The Observer,' 'The Spectator,' 'The Westminster Gazette,' 'Country Life' and 'The Cornhill Magazine,' for allowing me to print many poems which first appeared in their columns. The Proprietors of 'Punch' and 'Blackwood's Magazine' have generously given permission for the inclusion of several copyright poems. To Mr. J. B. Atkins, Mr. Bruce Richmond, and Miss Naomi Royde-Smith I am indebted for innumerable kindnesses.

I shall not here attempt to give more than a general word of thanks to the many kind friends who have helped me in the preparation of this little volume, but I cannot omit to mention my special sense of gratitude to Mrs. Andrew Lang, without whose encouragement it would never have been undertaken, to Sir Vincent Baddeley, and to my sister Angela Trotter, to whose assistance its final completion is due.

J.T.T.

JERUSALEM,
Nov. 1919.

NOTE TO THE NEW EDITION

THE immediate and generous reception which was given to the first edition of this Anthology cannot be too gratefully acknowledged. I should like to add a word of explanation to account for its disappearance from circulation so soon after publication. The number printed as the First Edition seemed adequate, but when the gratifying fact that the demand had exceeded the supply became evident, the type had been distributed and I was absent from England, so that any reprint was impossible. Later, it appeared wise to wait for possible further publications which would rightly find place in a revised edition.

I now most gladly avail myself of an invitation to prepare a new edition, and I have taken the opportunity to add some of the war poetry published since 1919, and to remedy certain omissions. Thirty-seven new poems are included and seventeen more authors are represented.

The time is now ripe to offer a considered selection of war poetry which seems likely to have permanent value. With this end in view, and in the hope that these poems may recall our Nation's purpose in the Great War, this selection has been made in gratitude and admiration.

I have again to thank authors and publishers for their generosity, and many kind friends for criticism and advice.

J.T.T.

LONDON,
August 1923.

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1914

I

The Fourth of August

NOW in thy splendour go before us,
Spirit of England, ardent-eyed,
Enkindle this dear earth that bore us,
In the hour of peril purified.

The cares we hugged drop out of vision,
Our hearts with deeper thoughts dilate.
We step from days of sour division
Into the grandeur of our fate.

For us the glorious dead have striven,
They battled that we might be free.
We to their living cause are given;
We arm for men that are to be.

Among the nations nobliest chartered,
England recalls her heritage.
In her is that which is not bartered,
Which force can neither quell nor cage.

For her immortal stars are burning;
With her the hope that 's never done,
The seed that 's in the Spring 's returning,
The very flower that seeks the sun.

She fights the fraud that feeds desire on
Lies, in a lust to enslave or kill,
The barren creed of blood and iron,
Vampire of Europe's wasted will. . . .

Endure, O Earth! and thou, awaken,
Purged by this dreadful winnowing-fan,
O wronged, untameable, unshaken
Soul of divinely suffering man.

LAURENCE BINYON

2

'For all we have and are'

FOR all we have and are,
For all our children's fate,
Stand up and take the war,
The Hun is at the gate!
Our world has passed away,
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone!
Though all we knew depart,
The old Commandments stand:—
'In courage keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand.'

Once more we hear the word
That sickened earth of old:—
'No law except the Sword
Unsheathed and uncontrolled.'
Once more it knits mankind,
Once more the nations go
To meet and break and bind
A crazed and driven foe.

1914

Comfort, content, delight,
The ages' slow-bought gain,
They shrivelled in a night.
Only ourselves remain
To face the naked days
In silent fortitude,
Through perils and dismays
Renewed and re-renewed.
Though all we made depart,
The old Commandments stand:—
'In patience keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand.'

No easy hopes or lies
Shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice
Of body, will, and soul.
There is but one task for all—
One life for each to give.
Who stands if Freedom fall?
Who dies if England live?

RUDYARD KIPLING

3

Happy is England now

THERE is not anything more wonderful
Than a great people moving towards the deep
Of an unguessed and unfeared future; nor
Is aught so dear of all held dear before
As the new passion stirring in their veins
When the destroying Dragon wakes from sleep.

Happy is England now, as never yet!
And though the sorrows of the slow days fret
Her faithfullest children, grief itself is proud.
Ev'n the warm beauty of this spring and summer
That turns to bitterness turns then to gladness
Since for this England the beloved ones died.

Happy is England in the brave that die
For wrongs not hers and wrongs so sternly hers;
Happy in those that give, give, and endure
The pain that never the new years may cure;
Happy in all her dark woods, green fields, towns,
Her hills and rivers and her chafing sea.

Whate'er was dear before is dearer now.
There 's not a bird singing upon his bough
But sings the sweeter in our English ears:
There 's not a nobleness of heart, hand, brain
But shines the purer; happiest is England now
In those that fight, and watch with pride and tears.

JOHN FREEMAN

4

The Search-lights

SHADOW by shadow, stripped for fight,
The lean black cruisers search the sea.
Night-long their level shafts of light
Revolve, and find no enemy.
Only they know each leaping wave
May hide the lightning, and their grave.

1914

And in the land they guard so well
  Is there no silent watch to keep?
An age is dying, and the bell
  Rings midnight on a vaster deep.
But over all its waves, once more,
The search-lights move, from shore to shore.

And captains that we thought were dead,
  And dreamers that we thought were dumb,
And voices that we thought were fled,
  Arise, and call us, and we come;
And 'Search in thine own soul,' they cry;
'For there, too, lurks thine enemy.'

Search for the foe in thine own soul,
  The sloth, the intellectual pride;
The trivial jest that veils the goal
  For which our fathers lived and died;
The lawless dreams, the cynic Art,
That rend thy nobler self apart.

Not far, not far into the night,
  These level swords of light can pierce;
Yet for her faith does England fight,
  Her faith in this our universe;
Believing Truth and Justice draw
From founts of everlasting law;

Therefore a Power above the State,
  The unconquerable Power returns.
The fire, the fire that made her great
  Once more upon her altar burns.
Once more, redeemed and healed and whole,
She moves to the Eternal Goal.

ALFRED NOYES

5

The Naval Reserve

FROM the undiscovered deep
Where the blessed lie at ease—
Since the ancient navies keep
Empire of the heavenly seas—
Back they come, the mighty dead,
Quick to serve where they have led.

Rushing on the homeward gale,
Swift they come, to seek their place
Where the grey flotillas sail,
Where the children of their race
Now against the foe maintain
All they gave their lives to gain.

Rank on rank, the admirals
Rally to their old commands:
Where the crash of battle falls,
There the one-armed hero stands.
Loud upon his phantom mast
Speak the signals of the past.

Where upon the friendly wave
Stand our squadrons as of old,
Where the lonely deed and brave
Shall the ancient torch uphold,
Strive for England, side by side,
Those who live and those who died.

EVELYN UNDERHILL

6

Mine-sweeping Trawlers

NOT ours the fighter's glow,
the glory, and the praise.
Unnoticed to and fro
we pass our dangerous ways.

We sift the drifting sea,
and blindly grope beneath;
obscure and toilsome we,
the fishermen of death.

But when the great ships go
to battle through the gloom,
our hearts beat high to know
we cleared their path of doom.

E. Hilton Young

7

Men who march away

(*Song of the Soldiers.*)

WHAT of the faith and the fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
Leaving all that here can win us;
What of the faith and fire within us
Men who march away?

VALOUR AND VISION

Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye,
Who watch us stepping by
With doubt and dolorous sigh?
Can much pondering so hoodwink you!
Is it a purblind prank, O think you,
Friend with the musing eye?

Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see—
Dalliers as they be—
England's need are we;
Her distress would leave us rueing:
Nay. We well see what we are doing,
Though some may not see!

In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just,
And that braggarts must
Surely bite the dust,
Press we to the field ungrieving,
In our heart of hearts believing
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away
Ere the barn-cocks say
Night is growing gray,
Leaving all that here can win us;
Hence the faith and fire within us
Men who march away.

THOMAS HARDY

1914

8

To the British Expeditionary Force

BRITISH soldiers, once again
You are marshalled on the plain
By our fathers' blood renowned:
You are treading sacred ground!
Harken, harken as you pass,
To the voices in the grass!
On the Belgian soil it waves
O'er the lone, unnumbered graves
Where immortal warriors lie,
Devotees of Liberty
Nobly fallen in the fray.
Ramillies and Malplaquet,
Quatre Bras and Waterloo
Yield their legions up to you!
British soldiers, you will fight
'Neath the banner of the Right:
You are holding in your hands
Liberty of little lands,
Seeking nothing, giving all.
Answering to Honour's call.
Stay aggression's grim attack!
Hurl the impious menace back
Devotees of Liberty,
Ride you now to victory!
We in England watch and pray;
Ramillies and Malplaquet,
Quatre Bras and Waterloo
Yield their soul to strengthen you!

LORD GORELL

9

To the Vanguard

OH little mighty Force that stood for England!
That, with your bodies for a living shield,
Guarded her slow awaking, that defied
The sudden challenge of tremendous odds
And fought the rushing legions to a stand—
Then stark in grim endurance held the line.
O little Force that in your agony
Stood fast while England girt her armour on,
Held high our honour in your wounded hands,
Carried our honour safe with bleeding feet—
We have no glory great enough for you,
The very soul of Britain keeps your day!
Procession?—Marches forth a Race in Arms;
And, for the thunder of the crowd's applause,
Crash upon crash the voice of monstrous guns,
Fed by the sweat, served by the life of England,
Shouting your battle-cry across the world.

Oh, little mighty Force, your way is ours,
This land inviolate your monument.

BEATRIX BRICE

1914

10

The Toy Band

A Song of the Great Retreat

DREARY lay the long road, dreary lay the town,
Lights out and never a glint o' moon:
Weary lay the stragglers, half a thousand down,
Sad sighed the weary big Dragoon.
'Oh! if I'd a drum here to make them take the road again,
Oh! if I'd a fife to wheedle, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

'Hey, but here's a toy shop, here 's a drum for me,
Penny whistles too to play the tune!
Half a thousand dead men soon shall hear and see
We're a band!' said the weary big Dragoon.
'Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!'

Cheerly goes the dark road, cheerly goes the night,
Cheerly goes the blood to keep the beat:
Half a thousand dead men marching on to fight
With a little penny drum to lift their feet.
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

As long as there 's an Englishman to ask a tale of me,
  As long as I can tell the tale aright,
We'll not forget the penny whistle's wheedle-deedle-dee
  And the big Dragoon a-beating down the night,
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
  Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load
      again,
  Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

HENRY NEWBOLT

11

The Wife of Flanders

LOW and brown barns thatched and repatched and
      tattered
  Where I had seven sons until to-day,
A little hill of hay your spur has scattered. . . .
  This is not Paris. You have lost the way.

You, staring at your sword to find it brittle,
  Surprised at the surprise that was your plan,
Who shaking and breaking barriers not a little
  Find never more the death-door of Sedan.

Must I for more than carnage call you claimant,
  Paying you a penny for each son you slay?
Man, the whole globe in gold were no repayment
  For what YOU have lost. And how shall I repay?

What is the price of that red spark that caught me
  From a kind farm that never had a name?
What is the price of that dead man they brought me?
  For other dead men do not look the same.

1914

How should I pay for one poor graven steeple
  Whereon you shattered what you shall not know,
How should I pay you, miserable people?
  How should I pay you everything you owe?

Unhappy, can I give you back your honour?
  Though I forgave would any man forget?
While all the great green land has trampled on her
  The treason and terror of the night we met.

Not any more in vengeance or in pardon
  An old wife bargains for a bean that 's hers.
You have no word to break: no heart to harden.
  Ride on and prosper. You have lost your spurs.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

12

They came from far

WITH rainbow gifts life filled her joyous hands
  And held them out, with kisses on her lips.
But the boys, knowing all,
Shook their young heads and laughed, and sought the ships,
To carry them to grey and distant lands,
Hearing another call.

And death, because they laughed and had no guile,
Sent a great star to fill them with content.
So the boys, undismayed,
Walked the dark valley singing as they went.
And God was surely with them all the while,
Since they were not afraid.

ALYS FANE TROTTER

13

The Colonists

TO men now of her blood and race
England 's a little garden place,
Dear as a woman is, and she
The Queen of every loyalty.

To dwellers 'mid the ice and snows,
She is their secret garden rose
From which that bee, their heart, sucks off
For the cold Winter honey enough.

To toilers 'mid the sultry plains,
Sick for her tempered suns and rains,
She is the thought that wets their eyes
And hearts with dew of Paradise.

Most loved of those who never knew
Her green o' the silk and her soft blue,
Her mild inviolate fields that be
Hedged with the sweet-briar of the sea.

Sweet in their dreams her Summers are,
Her tranquil nights of moon and star,
The love-songs of her nightingales ;
A water-spring that never fails.

Amid their unending distances
Her little crowded sweetness is
A dream of rest, a dream of prayer,
With homes and children everywhere.

Touch her—and they are all on fire,
This little land of their desire
Seen in a mirage far away
With light upon her night and day.

KATHARINE TYNAN

14

The Indian Army

INTO the West they are marching! This is their
longed-for day
When that which England gave them they may at last
repay;
When for the faith she dealt them, peasants and priests
and lords,
When for the love they bear her, they shall unsheathe
their swords!

Men of the plains and hill-men, men born to warrior
rôles,
Tall men of matchless ardour, small men with mighty
souls,
Rulers alike and subjects: splendid the roll-call rings:
Rajahs and Maharajahs, Kings and the sons of Kings,

Bikanir, Patiala, Ratlam and Kishangarh,
Jodhpur, who rides the leopard down, Sachin and Cooch-
Behar,
From lands where skies are molten and suns strike down
and parch,
Out of the East they're marching, into the West they
march.

Oh little nimble Gurkhas, who've won a hundred fights,
Oh Sikhs—the Sikhs who failed not upon the Dargai
heights,
Rajputs, against whose valour once in a younger world
Ruthless, unceasing, vainly, the Mogul's hosts were hurled,

Grey are our Western daybreaks and grey our Western skies
And very cold the night-watch unbroke by jackals' cries;
Hard too will be the waiting—you do not love to wait?
Aye, but the charge with bayonets—they'll sound it soon or late!

And when that charge is sounded, who'll heed grey skies and cold?
Not you, Sikhs, Rajputs, Gurkhas, if to one thought you hold,
If as you cross the open, if as the foe you near,
If as you leap the trenches, this thought is very clear:

These foes, they are not sahibs: they break the word they plight,
On babes their blades are whetted, dead women know their might,
Their Princes are as sweepers whom none may touch or trust,
Their gods they have forgotten; their honour trails the dust;
All that they had of izzat is trodden under heel—
Into their hearts, my brothers, drive home, drive home the steel!

✠ R. E. Vernède

15

Field-Marshal Earl Roberts

HE died, as soldiers die, amid the strife,
Mindful of England in his latest prayer;
God, of His love, would have so fair a life
Crowned with a death as fair.

1914

He might not lead the battle as of old,
But, as of old, among his own he went,
Breathing a faith that never once grew cold,
A courage still unspent.

So was his end; and, in that hour, across
The face of War a wind of silence blew,
And bitterest foes paid tribute to the loss
Of a great heart and true.

But we who loved him, what have we to lay
For sign of worship on his warrior-bier?
What homage, could his lips but speak to-day,
Would he have held most dear?

Not grief, as for a life untimely reft;
Not vain regret for counsel given in vain;
Not pride of that high record he has left,
Peerless and pure of stain;

But service of our lives to keep her free,
The land he served; a pledge above his grave
To give her even such a gift as he,
The soul of loyalty, gave.

That oath we plight, as now the trumpets swell
His requiem, and the men-at-arms stand mute,
And through the mist the guns he loved so well
Thunder a last salute!

Owen Seaman

16

The Volunteer

HERE lies a clerk who half his life had spent
Toiling at ledgers in a city grey,
Thinking that so his days would drift away
With no lance broken in life's tournament:
Yet ever 'twixt the books and his bright eyes
The gleaming eagles of the legions came,
And horsemen, charging under phantom skies,
Went thundering past beneath the oriflamme.

And now those waiting dreams are satisfied;
From twilight to the halls of dawn he went;
His lance is broken; but he lies content
With that high hour, in which he lived and died.
And falling thus, he wants no recompense,
Who found his battle in the last resort;
Nor needs he any hearse to bear him hence,
Who goes to join the men of Agincourt.

HERBERT ASQUITH

17

To Women

YOUR hearts are lifted up, your hearts
That have foreknown the utter price.
Your hearts burn upward like a flame
Of splendour and of sacrifice.

1914

For you, you too, to battle go,
Not with the marching drums and cheers
But in the watch of solitude
And through the boundless night of fears.

Swift, swifter than those hawks of war,
Those threatening wings that pulse the air,
Far as the vanward ranks are set,
You are gone before them, you are there!

And not a shot comes blind with death
And not a stab of steel is pressed
Home, but invisibly it tore
And entered first a woman's breast.

Amid the thunder of the guns,
The lightnings of the lance and sword,
Your hope, your dread, your throbbing pride,
Your infinite passion is outpoured

From hearts that are as one high heart
Withholding naught from doom and bale,
Burningly offered up,—to bleed,
To bear, to break, but not to fail!

LAURENCE BINYON

18

Many Sisters to many Brothers

WHEN we fought campaigns (in the long Christmas rains)
With soldiers spread in troops on the floor,
I shot as straight as you, my losses were as few,
My victories as many, or more.

And when in naval battle, amid cannon's rattle,
  Fleet met fleet in the bath,
My cruisers were as trim, my battleships as grim,
  My submarines cut as swift a path.
Or, when it rained too long, and the strength of the strong
  Surged up and broke a way with blows,
I was as fit and keen, my fists hit as clean,
  Your black eye matched my bleeding nose.
Was there a scrap or ploy in which you, the boy,
  Could better me? You could not climb higher,
Ride straighter, run as quick (and to smoke made you sick)
. . . But I sit here, and you're under fire.

Oh, it's you that have the luck, out there in blood and muck:
  You were born beneath a kindly star;
All we dreamt, I and you, you can really go and do,
  And I can't, the way things are.
In a trench you are sitting, while I am knitting
  A hopeless sock that never gets done.
Well, here's luck, my dear;—and you've got it, no fear;
  But for me . . . a war is poor fun.

ROSE MACAULAY

19

The Admonition:—To Betsey

REMEMBER, on your knees,
The men who guard your slumbers—

And guard a house in a still street
Of drifting leaves and drifting feet,
A deep blue window where below
Lies moonlight on the roofs like snow,

1914

A clock that still the quarters tells
To the dove that roosts beneath the bell's
Grave canopy of silent brass
Round which the little night winds pass
Yet stir it not in the grey steeple ;
And guard all small and drowsy people
Whom gentlest dusk doth disattire,
Undressing by the nursery fire
In unperturbed numbers
On this side of the seas—

Remember, on your knees,
The men who guard your slumbers.

HELEN PARRY EDEN

20

Flower of Youth

LEST Heaven be thronged with grey-beards hoary,
God, who made boys for His delight,
Stoops in a day of grief and glory
And calls them in, in from the night.
When they come trooping from the war
Our skies have many a new gold star.

Heaven's thronged with gay and careless faces,
New-waked from dreams of dreadful things,
They walk in green and pleasant places
And by the crystal water-springs
Who dreamt of dying and the slain,
And the fierce thirst and the strong pain.

Dear boys! They shall be young for ever.
The Son of God was once a boy.
They run and leap by a clear river
And of their youth they have great joy.
God who made boys so clean and good
Smiles with the eyes of Fatherhood.

Now Heaven is by the young invaded;
Their laughter 's in the House of God.
Stainless and simple as He made it
God keeps the heart o' the boy unflawed.
The old wise saints look on and smile,
They are so young and without guile.

Oh, if the sonless mothers weeping,
And widowed girls could look inside
The glory that hath them in keeping
Who went to the Great War and died,
They would rise and put their mourning off,
And say: 'Thank God, he has enough!'

KATHARINE TYNAN

21

The Army of the Dead

I DREAMED that overhead
I saw in twilight grey
The Army of the Dead
Marching upon its way,
So still and passionless,
With faces so serene,
That scarcely could one guess
Such men in war had been.

1914

No mark of hurt they bore,
Nor smoke, nor bloody stain,
Nor suffered any more
Famine, fatigue or pain;
Nor any lust of hate
Now lingered in their eyes—
Who have fulfilled their Fate
Have lost all enmities.

A new and greater pride
So quenched the pride of race
That foes marched side by side
Who once fought face to face.
That ghostly army's plan
Knows but one race, one rod—
All nations there are Men
And the one King is God.

No longer on their ears
The bugle's summons falls;
Beyond these tangled spheres
The Archangel's trumpet calls;
And by that trumpet led
Far up the exalted sky
The Army of the Dead
Goes by, and still goes by.

Look upward, standing mute;
Salute!

Barry Pain

22

Gods of War

FATE wafts us from the pygmies' shore:
We swim beneath the epic skies:
A Rome and Carthage war once more,
And wider empires are the prize;
Where the beaked galleys clashed; lo, these
Our iron dragons of the seas!

High o'er the cloudy battle sweep
The winged chariots in their flight:
The steely creatures of the deep
Cleave the dark waters' ancient night:
Below, above, in wave, in air,
New worlds for conquest everywhere.

More terrible than spear or sword
Those stars that burst with fiery breath:
More loud the battle cries are poured
Along a hundred leagues of death.
So do they fight. How have ye warred,
Defeated Armies of the Lord?

This is the Dark Immortal's hour,
His victory, whoever fail;
His prophets have not lost their power:
Cæsar and Attila prevail.
These are your legions still, proud ghosts,
These myriad embattled hosts.

How wanes Thine empire, Prince of Peace!
With the fleet circling of the suns

1914

The ancient gods their power increase;
  Lo, how Thine own anointed ones
Make holy all Thy soul abhorred,
The hate on which Thy love had warred.

Who dreamed a dream 'mid outcasts born
  Could overbrow the pride of kings?
They pour on Christ the ancient scorn.
  His Dove its gold and silver wings
Has spread. Perhaps it nests in flame
In outcasts who abjure His name.

Choose ye your rightful gods, nor pay
  Lip reverence that the heart denies.
O Nations, is not Zeus to-day,
  The thunderer from the epic skies,
More than the Prince of Peace? Is Thor
Not nobler for a world at war?

They fit the dreams of power we hold,
  Those gods whose names are with us still,
Men in their image made of old
  The high companions of their will.
Who build in air an empire's pride—
Would they pray to the Crucified?

O outcast Christ, it was too soon
  For flags of battle to be furled
While life was yet at the hot noon.
  Come in the twilight of the world:
Its kings may greet Thee without scorn
And crown Thee then without a thorn.

A.E.

23

The Return

I HEARD the rumbling guns. I saw the smoke,
The unintelligible shock of hosts that still,
Far off, unseeing, strove and strove again:
And Beauty flying naked down the hill.

From morn till eve: and then stern night cried Peace!
And shut the strife in darkness: all was still.
Then slowly crept a triumph on the dark—
And I heard Beauty singing up the hill.

JOHN FREEMAN

24

The Debt Unpayable

WHAT have I given,
Bold sailor on the sea,
In earth or heaven
That you should die for me?

What can I give
O soldier, leal and brave
Long as I live,
To pay the life you gave?

What tithe or part
Can I return to thee,
O stricken heart,
That thou should'st break for me?

The wind of Death
For you has slain life's flowers,
It withereth
(God grant!) all weeds in ours.

F. W. BOURDILLON

1914

25

For the Fallen

WITH proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

LAURENCE BINYON

26

I. Peace

NOW, God be thanked Who has matched us with
His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honour could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love!

Oh! we, who have known shame, we have found release
there,
Where there 's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
Naught broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there
But only agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.

II. Safety

DEAR! of all happy in the hour, most blest
He who has found our hid security,
Assured in the dark tides of the world at rest,
And heard our word, 'Who is so safe as we?'
We have found safety with all things undying,
The winds, and morning, tears of men and mirth,
The deep night, and birds singing, and clouds flying,
And sleep, and freedom, and the autumnal earth.
We have built a house that is not for Time's throwing.
We have gained a peace unshaken by pain for ever.
War knows no power. Safe shall be my going,
Secretly armed against all death's endeavour;
Safe though all safety 's lost; safe where men fall;
And if these poor limbs die, safest of all.

III. The Dead

BLOW out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

IV. The Dead

THESE hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

V. The Soldier

IF I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

✠ Rupert Brooke

27

The Dying Patriot

DAY breaks on England down the Kentish hills,
Singing in the silence of the meadow-footing rills,
Day of my dreams, O day!
I saw them march from Dover, long ago,
With a silver cross before them, singing low,
Monks of Rome from their home where the blue seas break in foam,
Augustine with his feet of snow.

1914

Noon strikes on England, noon on Oxford town,
—Beauty she was statue cold—there's blood upon her gown:
Noon of my dreams, O noon!
Proud and godly kings had built her, long ago,
With her towers and tombs and statues all arow,
With her fair and floral air and the love that lingers there,
And the streets where the great men go.

Evening on the olden, the golden sea of Wales,
When the first star shivers and the last wave pales:
O evening dreams!
There's a house that Britons walked in, long ago,
Where now the springs of ocean fall and flow,
And the dead robed in red and sea-lilies overhead
Sway when the long winds blow.

Sleep not, my country: though night is here, afar
Your children of the morning are clamorous for war:
Fire in the night, O dreams!
Though she send you as she sent you, long ago,
South to desert, east to ocean, west to snow,
West of these out to seas colder than the Hebrides I must go
Where the fleet of stars is anchored and the young Star-captains glow.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

28

USE me, England,
in thine hour of need,
Let thy ruling
rule me now in deed.

Sons and brothers
take for armoury.
All love's jewels
crushed, thy warpath be.

Thou hast given
joyous life and free,
Life whose joy now
anguisheth for thee.

Give then, England,
if my life thou need,
Gift yet fairer,
Death, thy life to feed.

ELIZABETH BRIDGES

29

The Ships of Grief

ON seas where every pilot fails
A thousand thousand ships to-day
Ride with a moaning in their sails,
Through winds grey and waters grey.

They are the ships of grief. They go
As fleets are derelict and driven,
Estranged from every port they know,
Scarce asking fortitude of heaven.

No, do not hail them. Let them ride
Lonely as they would lonely be . . .
There is an hour will prove the tide,
There is a sun will strike the sea.

JOHN DRINKWATER

1915

Battle of the Dogger Bank

Neuve Chapelle
Second Battle of Ypres
Festubert

Gallipoli:
The Landing
Battle of Krithia
Suvla Bay
The Evacuation

Aden

Hill 60
Hooge
Loos

Capture of Kut-el-Amara
Battle of Ctesiphon

Salonika
Macedonia

1915

30

Before the Assault

IF thro' this roar o' the guns one prayer may reach Thee,
  Lord of all Life, whose mercies never sleep,
Not in our time, not now, Lord, we beseech Thee
  To grant us peace. The sword has bit too deep.

We may not rest. We hear the wail of mothers
  Mourning the sons who fill some nameless grave:
Past us, in dreams, the ghosts march of our brothers
  Who were most valiant . . . whom we could not save.

We may not rest. What though our eyes be holden,
  In sleep we see dear eyes yet wet with tears,
And locks that once were, oh, so fair and golden,
  Grown grey in hours more pitiless than years.

We see all fair things fouled—homes love's hands builded
  Shattered to dust beside their withered vines,
Shattered the towers that once Thy sunsets gilded,
  And Christ struck yet again within His shrines.

Over them hangs the dust of death, beside them
  The dead lie countless—and the foe laughs still;
We may not rest, while those cruel mouths deride them,
  We, who were proud, yet could not work Thy will.

We have failed—we have been more weak than these
    betrayers—
  In strength or in faith we have failed; our pride was
    vain.
How can we rest, who have not slain the slayers?
  What peace for us, who have seen Thy children slain?

Hark, the roar grows . . . the thunders reawaken—
We ask one thing, Lord, only one thing now:
Hearts high as theirs, who went to death unshaken,
Courage like theirs to make and keep their vow.

To stay not till these hosts whom mercies harden,
Who know no glory save of sword and fire,
Find in our fire the splendour of Thy pardon,
Meet from our steel the mercy they desire. . . .

Then to our children there shall be no handing
Of fates so vain—of passions so abhorr'd . . .
But Peace . . . the Peace which passeth understanding . . .
Not in our time . . . but in their time, O Lord.

✠ R. E. Vernède.

31

From a Flemish Graveyard

A YEAR hence may the grass that waves
O'er English men in Flemish graves,
Coating this clay with green of peace
And softness of a year's increase,
Be kind and lithe as English grass
To bend and nod as the winds pass;
It was for grass on English hills
These bore too soon the last of ills.

And may the wind be brisk and clean,
And singing cheerfully between
The bents a pleasant-burdened song
To cheer these English dead along;
For English songs and English winds
Are they that bred these English minds.

And may the circumstantial trees
Dip, for these dead ones, in the breeze,
And make for them their silver play
Of spangled boughs each shiny day.
Thus may these look above, and see
And hear the wind in grass and tree,
And watch a lark in heaven stand,
And think themselves in their own land.

IOLO ANEURIN WILLIAMS

32

Into Battle

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;

And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight,
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather;
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, 'Brother, brother,
'If this be the last song you shall sing
'Sing well, for you may not sing another;
'Brother, sing.'

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;—
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

1915

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

✠ Julian Grenfell

33

Julian Grenfell

BECAUSE of you we will be glad and gay,
Remembering you, we will be brave and strong;
And hail the advent of each dangerous day,
And meet the last adventure with a song.
And, as you proudly gave your jewelled gift,
We'll give our lesser offering with a smile,
Nor falter on that path where, all too swift,
You led the way and leapt the golden stile.

Whether new paths, new heights to climb you find,
Or gallop through the unfooted asphodel,
We know you know we shall not lag behind,
Nor halt to waste a moment on a fear;
And you will speed us onward with a cheer,
And wave beyond the stars that all is well.

Maurice Baring

34

Three Hills

THERE is a hill in England,
Green fields and a school I know,
Where the balls fly fast in summer,
And the whispering elm-trees grow,
A little hill, a dear hill,
And the playing fields below.

There is a hill in Flanders,
Heaped with a thousand slain,
Where the shells fly night and noontide
And the ghosts that died in vain,
A little hill, a hard hill
To the souls that died in pain.

There is a hill in Jewry,
Three crosses pierce the sky,
On the midmost He is dying
To save all those who die,
A little hill, a kind hill
To souls in jeopardy.

EVERARD OWEN

35

A Harrow Grave in Flanders

HERE in the marshland, past the battered bridge,
One of a hundred grains untimely sown,
Here, with his comrades of the hard-won ridge
He rests, unknown.

1915

His horoscope had seemed so plainly drawn—
  School triumphs, earned apace in work and play;
Friendships at will; then love's delightful dawn
    And mellowing day.

Home fostering hope; some service to the State;
  Benignant age; then the long tryst to keep
Where in the yew-tree shadow congregate
    His Fathers sleep.

Was here the one thing needful to distil
  From life's alembic, through this holier fate,
The man's essential soul, the hero will?
    We ask,—and wait.

MARQUESS OF CREWE

36

Field Ambulance in Retreat

Via Dolorosa, Via Sacra

I

A STRAIGHT flagged road, laid on the rough earth,
  A causeway of stone from beautiful city to city,
Between the tall trees, the slender, delicate trees,
Through the flat green land, by plots of flowers, by black
    canals thick with heat.

II

The road-makers made it well
Of fine stone, strong for the feet of the oxen and of the
    great Flemish horses,
And for the high wagons piled with corn from the harvest.

And the labourers are few;
They and their quiet oxen stand aside and wait
By the long road loud with the passing of the guns, the rush of armoured cars, and the tramp of an army on the march forward to battle;
And, where the piled corn-wagons went, our dripping Ambulance carries home
Its red and white harvest from the fields.

III

The straight flagged road breaks into dust, into a thin white cloud,
About the feet of a regiment driven back league by league,
Rifles at trail, and standards wrapped in black funeral cloths.
Unhasting, proud in retreat,
They smile as the Red Cross Ambulance rushes by.
(You know nothing of beauty and of desolation who have not seen
That smile of an army in retreat.)
They go: and our shining, beckoning danger goes with them,
And our joy in the harvests that we gathered in at night-fall in the fields;
And like an unloved hand laid on a beating heart
Our safety weighs us down.
Safety hard and strange; stranger and yet more hard
As, league after dying league, the beautiful, desolate Land
Falls back from the intolerable speed of an Ambulance in retreat
On the sacred, dolorous Way.

MAY SINCLAIR

1915

37

St. George's Day—Ypres 1915

TO fill the gap, to bear the brunt
With bayonet and with spade,
Four hundred to a four-mile front
Unbacked and undismayed—
What men are these, of what great race,
From what old shire or town,
That run with such goodwill to face
Death on a Flemish down?

Let be! they bind a broken line:
As men die, so die they.
Land of the free! their life was thine,
It is St. George's Day.

Yet say whose ardour bids them stand
At bay by yonder bank,
Where a boy's voice and a boy's hand
Close up the quivering rank,
Who under those all-shattering skies
Plays out his captain's part
With the last darkness in his eyes
And *Domum* in his heart?

Let be, let be! in yonder line
All names are burned away.
Land of his love! the fame be thine,
It is St. George's Day.

HENRY NEWBOLT

38

'Lochaber no more!'

FAREWELL to Lochaber, farewell to the glen,
No more will he wander Lochaber again.
Lochaber no more! Lochaber no more!
The lad will return to Lochaber no more!
The trout will come back from the deeps of the sea,
The bird from the wilderness back to the tree,
Flowers to the mountain and tides to the shore,
But he will return to Lochaber no more!

O why should the hills last, that never were young,
Unperishing stars in the heavens be hung;
Be constant the seasons, undrying the stream,
And he that was gallant be gone like a dream?
Brave songs will be singing in Isles of the West,
But he will be silent who sang them the best;
The dance will be waiting, the pipes will implore,
But he will return to Lochaber no more!

Child of the forest! profound is thy sleep,
The valley that loved thee awakes but to weep;
When our fires are rekindled at dawn of the morn,
Our griefs burn afresh, and our prayers are forlorn;
The night falls disconsolate, bringing no peace,
No hope for our dreams, for our sighs no release;
In vain come the true hearts and look from the door,
For thou wilt return to Lochaber no more!

NEIL MUNRO

1915

39

Farewell

FOR the last time, maybe, upon the knoll
I stand. The eve is golden, languid, sad. . . .
Day like a tragic actor plays his rôle
To the last whispered word, and falls gold-clad.
I, too, take leave of all I ever had.

They shall not say I went with heavy heart:
Heavy I am, but soon I shall be free;
I love them all, but oh I now depart
A little sadly, strangely, fearfully,
As one who goes to try a Mystery.

The bell is sounding down in Dedham vale:
Be still, O bell! too often standing here
When all the air was tremulous, fine, and pale,
Thy golden note so calm, so still, so clear,
Out of my stony heart has struck a tear.

And now tears are not mine. I have release
From all the former and the later pain;
Like the mid-sea I rock in boundless peace,
Soothed by the charity of the deep sea rain. . . .
Calm rain! Calm sea! Calm found, long sought in vain.

O bronzen pines, evening of gold and blue,
Steep mellow slope, brimmed twilit pools below,
Hushed trees, still vale dissolving in the dew,
Farewell! Farewell! There is no more to do.
We have been happy. Happy now I go.

ROBERT NICHOLS

40

The Last Evening

ROUND a bright isle, set in a sea of gloom,
We sat together, dining,
And spoke and laughed even as in better times
Though each one knew no other might misdoubt
The doom that marched moment by moment nigher,
Whose couriers knocked on every heart like death,
And changed all things familiar to our sight
Into strange shapes and grieving ghosts that wept.
The crimson-shaded light
Shed in the garden roses of red fire
That burned and bloomed on the decorous limes.
The hungry night that lay in wait without
Made blind, blue eyes against the silver's shining
And waked the affrighted candles with its breath
Out of their steady sleep, while round the room
The shadows crouched and crept.
Among the legions of beleaguering fears,
Still we sat on and kept them still at bay,
A little while, a little longer yet,
And wooed the hurrying moments to forget
What we remembered well,
—Till the hour struck—then desperately we sought
And found no further respite—only tears
We would not shed, and words we might not say.
We needs must know that now the time was come
Yet still against the strangling foe we fought,
And some of us were brave and some
Borrowed a bubble courage nigh to breaking,
And he that went, perforce went speedily
And stayed not for leave-taking.
But even in going, as he would dispel

The bitterness of incomplete good-byes,
He paused within the circle of dim light,
And turned to us a face, lit seemingly
Less by the lamp than by his shining eyes.
So, in the radiance of his mastered fate,
A moment stood our soldier by the gate
And laughed his long farewell—
Then passed into the silence and the night.

ELINOR JENKINS

41

Outward Bound

THERE 'S a waterfall I'm leaving
Running down the rocks in foam,
There 's a pool for which I'm grieving
Near the water-ouzel's home,
And it 's there that I'd be lying
With the heather close at hand,
And the curlews faintly crying
Mid the wastes of Cumberland.

While the midnight watch is winging
Thoughts of other days arise,
I can hear the river singing
Like the Saints in Paradise;
I can see the water winking
Like the merry eyes of Pan,
And the slow half-pounder sinking
By the bridge's granite span.

Ah! to win them back and clamber
Braced anew with winds I love,
From the river's stainless amber
To the morning mist above,

See through cloud-rifts rent asunder
Like a painted scroll unfurled,
Ridge and hollow rolling under
To the fringes of the world.

Now the weary guard are sleeping,
Now the great propellers churn,
Now the harbour lights are creeping
Into emptiness astern,
While the sentry wakes and watches
Plunging triangles of light
Where the water leaps and catches
At our escort in the night.

Great their happiness who seeing
Still with unbenighted eyes
Kin of theirs who gave them being,
Sun and earth that made them wise,
Die and feel their embers quicken
Year by year in summer time,
When the cotton grasses thicken
On the hills they used to climb.

Shall we also be as they be,
Mingled with our mother clay,
Or return no more it may be?
Who has knowledge, who shall say?
Yet we hope that from the bosom
Of our shaggy father Pan,
When the earth breaks into blossom
Richer from the dust of man,

Though the high Gods smite and slay us,
Though we come not whence we go,
As the host of Menelaus
Came there many years ago;

Yet the self-same wind shall bear us
From the same departing place
Out across the Gulf of Saros
And the peaks of Samothrace;

We shall pass in summer weather,
We shall come at eventide,
When the fells stand up together
And all quiet things abide;
Mixed with cloud and wind and river,
Sun-distilled in dew and rain,
One with Cumberland for ever
We shall go not forth again.

✠ Nowell Oxland

42

Rupert Brooke

HE'S gone.
I do not understand.
I only know
That as he turned to go
And waved his hand
In his young eyes a sudden glory shone:
And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,
And he was gone.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

43

From 'W' Beach

THE Isle of Imbros, set in turquoise blue,
Lies to the westward; on the eastern side
The purple hills of Asia fade from view,
And rolling battleships at anchor ride.

White flocks of cloud float by, the sunset glows,
And dipping gulls fleck a slow-waking sea,
Where dim steel-shadowed forms with foaming bows
Wind up the Narrows towards Gallipoli.

No colour breaks this tongue of barren land
Save where a group of huddled tents gleams white;
Before me ugly shapes like spectres stand,
And wooden crosses cleave the waning light.

Now the sky gardeners speed the hurrying day
And sow the plains of night with silver grain;
So shall this transient havoc fade away
And the proud cape be beautiful again.

Laden with figs and olives, or a freight
Of purple grapes, tanned singing men shall row,
Chanting wild songs of how Eternal Fate
Withstood that fierce invasion long ago.

GEOFFREY DEARMER

1915

44

Farewell to Anzac

OH, hump your swag and leave, lads, the ships are in the bay;
We've got our marching orders now, it's time to come away;
And a long good-bye to Anzac beach where blood has flowed in vain,
For we're leaving it, leaving it—game to fight again!

But some there are will never quit that bleak and bloody shore,
And some that marched and fought with us will fight and march no more;
Their blood has bought till judgement day the slopes they stormed so well,
And we're leaving them, leaving them, sleeping where they fell!

(Leaving them, leaving them, the bravest and the best;
Leaving them, leaving them, and maybe glad to rest!
We've done our best with yesterday, to-morrow's still our own—
But we're leaving them, leaving them, sleeping all alone!)

Ay, they are gone beyond it all, the praising and the blame,
And many a man may win renown, but none more fair a fame;
They showed the world Australia's lads knew well the way to die,
And we're leaving them, leaving them, quiet where they lie!

(Leaving them, leaving them, sleeping where they died;
Leaving them, leaving them, in their glory and their pride—
Round them sea and barren land, over them the sky,
Oh, we're leaving them, leaving them, quiet where they lie!)

C. Fox Smith

45

The Sky-sent Death

('*A German aeroplane flew over Greek territory dropping a bomb which killed a Shepherd.*')

SITTING on a stone a Shepherd,
Stone and Shepherd sleeping,
Under the high blue Attic sky;
Along the green monotony
Grey sheep creeping, creeping.

Deep down on the hill and valley,
At the bottom of the sunshine,
Like great Ships in clearest water,
Water holding anchored Shadows,
Water without wave or ripple,
Sunshine deep and clear and heavy,
Sunshine like a booming bell
Made of purest golden metal,
White Ships heavy in the sky
Sleep with anchored shadow.

Pipe a song in that still air
And the song would be of crystal

Snapped in silence, or a bronze vase
Smooth and graceful, curved and shining.
Tell an old tale or a history;
It would seem a slow Procession
Full of gestures; limbs and torso
White and rounded in the sunlight.

Sitting on a stone a Shepherd,
Stone and Shepherd sleeping,
Like a fragment of old marble
Dug up from the hillside shadow.

In the sunshine deep and soundless
Came a faint metallic humming;
In the sunshine clear and heavy
Came a speck, a speck of shadow—
Shepherd lift your head and listen,
Listen to that humming Shadow!

Sitting on a stone the Shepherd,
Stone and Shepherd sleeping
In a sleep dreamless as water,
Water in a white glass beaker,
Clear, pellucid, without shadow;
Underneath a sky-blue crystal
Sees his grey sheep creeping.

In the sunshine clear and heavy
Shadow-fled a dark hand downward:
In the sunshine deep and soundless
Burst a star-dropt thing of thunder—
Smoked the burnt blue air's torn veiling
Drooping softly round the hillside.

Boomed the silence in returning
To the crater in the hillside,

To the red earth fresh and bleeding,
To the mangled heap remaining:
Far away that humming Shadow
Vanished in the azure distance.

Sitting on a stone no Shepherd,
Stone and Shepherd sleeping,
But across the hill and valley
Grey sheep creeping, creeping,
Standing carven on the sky-line,
Scattering in the open distance,
Free, in no man's keeping.

W. J. Turner

46

Macleod's Lament

ALLAN Ian Òg Macleod of Raasay,
Treasure of mine, lies yonder dead in Loos,
His body unadorned by Highland raiment,
Trammelled for glorious hours, in Saxon trews.
Never man before of all his kindred
Went so apparelled to the burial knowe,
But with the pleated tartan for his shrouding,
The bonnet on his brow.

My grief! that Allan should depart so sadly,
When no wild mountain pipe his bosom wrung,
With no one of his race beside his shoulder,
Who knew his history or spake his tongue.

1915

Ah! lonely death and drear for darling Allan;
  Before his ghost had taken wings and gone,
Loud would he cry in Gaelic to his gallants,
    'Children of storm, press on!'

Beside him, when he fell there in his beauty,
  Macleods of all the islands should have died;
Brave hearts his English!—but they could not fathom
  To what old deeps the voice of Allan cried;
When in that strange French countryside war-battered,
  Far from the creeks of home and hills of heath,
A boy, he kept the old tryst of his people
    With the dark girl Death.

Oh, Allan Ian Òg! Oh, Allan aluinn!
  Sore is my heart remembering the past,
And you of Raasay's ancient gentle children
  The farthest-wandered, kindliest, and last.
It should have been the brave dead of the Islands
  That heard ring o'er their tombs your battle-cry,
To shake them from their sleep again, and quicken
    Peaks of Torridon and Skye!

Gone like the mist, the brave Macleods of Raasay,
  Far forth from fortune, sundered from their lands,
And now the last grey stone of Castle Raasay,
  Lies desolate and levelled with the sands;
But pluck the old isle from its roots deep planted
  Where tides cry coronach round the Hebrides,
And it will bleed of the Macleods lamented,
    Their loves and memories!

NEIL MUNRO

47

The Dead Fox-Hunter

(*In memory of Captain A. L. Sampson, R.W.F.*)

WE found the little captain at the head;
His men lay well aligned.
We touched his hand—stone-cold—and he was dead,
And they, all dead behind,
Had never reached their goal, but they died well;
They charged in line, and in the same line fell.

The well-known rosy colours of his face
Were almost lost in grey.
We saw that, dying and in hopeless case,
For others' sake that day
He'd smothered all rebellious groans: in death
His fingers were tight clenched between his teeth.

For those who live uprightly and die true
Heaven has no bars or locks,
And serves all taste. . . . Or what's for him to do
Up there, but hunt the fox?
Angelic choirs? No, Justice must provide
For one who rode straight and at hunting died.

So if Heaven had no Hunt before he came,
Why, it must find one now:
If any shirk and doubt they know the game,
There's one to teach them how:
And the whole host of Seraphim complete
Must jog in scarlet to his opening Meet.

ROBERT GRAVES

1915

48

Back to Rest

(*Composed while marching to Rest Camp after severe fighting at Loos*)

A LEAPING wind from England,
The skies without a stain,
Clean cut against the morning
Slim poplars after rain,
The foolish noise of sparrows
And starlings in a wood—
After the grime of battle
We know that these are good.

Death whining down from Heaven,
Death roaring from the ground,
Death stinking in the nostril,
Death shrill in every sound,
Doubting we charged and conquered—
Hopeless we struck and stood.
Now when the fight is ended
We know that it was good.

We that have seen the strongest
Cry like a beaten child,
The sanest eyes unholy,
The cleanest hands defiled,
We that have known the heart blood
Less than the lees of wine,
We that have seen men broken,
We know man is divine.

✠ William Noel Hodgson

49

After Loos

(*Café Pierre Le Blanc, Nouex-les-Mines, Michaelmas Eve*, 1915)

WAS it only yesterday
Lusty comrades marched away?
Now they're covered up with clay.

Seven glasses used to be
Called for six good mates and me—
Now we only call for three.

Little crosses neat and white,
Looking lonely every night,
Tell of comrades killed in fight.

Hearty fellows they have been,
And no more will they be seen
Drinking wine in Nouex-les-Mines.

Lithe and supple lads were they,
Marching merrily away—
Was it only yesterday?

PATRICK MACGILL

50

A Sonnet

WHEN you see millions of the mouthless dead
Across your dreams in pale battalions go,
Say not soft things as other men have said,
That you'll remember. For you need not so.

Give them not praise. For, deaf, how should they know
It is not curses heaped on each gashed head?
Nor tears. Their blind eyes see not your tears flow.
Nor honour. It is easy to be dead.

Say only this, 'They are dead.' Then add thereto,
'Yet many a better one has died before.'
Then, scanning all the o'ercrowded mass, should you
Perceive one face that you loved heretofore,
It is a spook. None wears the face you knew.
Great death has made all his for evermore.

✠ Charles Hamilton Sorley

51

In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'

(*Jeremiah, li*, 20)

I

ONLY a man harrowing clods
In a slow silent walk
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
Half asleep as they stalk.

II

Only thin smoke without flame
From the heaps of couch-grass;
Yet this will go onward the same
Though Dynasties pass.

III

Yonder a maid and her wight
Come whispering by:
War's annals will cloud into night
Ere their story die.

Thomas Hardy

52

The Question

I WONDER if the old cow died or not.
Gey bad she was the night I left, and sick.
Dick reckoned she would mend. He knows a lot—
At least he fancies so himself, does Dick.

Dick knows a lot. But maybe I did wrong
To leave the cow to him, and come away.
Over and over like a silly song
These words keep bumming in my head all day.

And all I think of, as I face the foe
And take my lucky chance of being shot,
Is this—that if I'm hit, I'll never know
Till Doomsday if the old cow died or not.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

53

The Old Houses of Flanders

THE old houses of Flanders,
They watch by the high cathedrals;
They overtop the high town-halls;
They have eyes, mournful, tolerant, and sardonic, for the ways of men
In the high, white, tiled gables.

The rain and the night have settled down on Flanders;
It is all wet darkness; you can see nothing.

Then those old eyes, mournful, tolerant, and sardonic,
Look at great, sudden, red lights,
Look upon the shades of the cathedrals;
And the golden rods of the illuminated rain
For a second. . . .

And those old eyes,
Very old eyes that have watched the ways of men for
generations,
Close for ever.
The high, white shoulders of the gables
Slouch together for a consultation,
Slant drunkenly over in the lea of the flaming cathedrals.

They are no more, the old houses of Flanders.

FORD MADOX FORD

54

Zepp Days

A Roundel

IN London town the lights are low,
And all ways are adventurous grown,
For fearfully the people go
In London town.

The red lights flicker dancing down,
The white lights pass you ere you know,
Like fairy lanterns, tossed and blown
Tumultuously to and fro;
While in a fuller glory shown
The moon shines down on old Soho
In London town.

P. H. B. LYON

55

A Thanksgiving

BEFORE the winter's haunted nights are o'er,
I thankfully rejoice that stars look down
Above the darkened streets, and I adore
The Heavens in London Town.

The Heavens, beneath which Alfred stood, when he
Built ramparts by the tide against his foes,
The skies men loved, when in eternity
The dreamlike Abbey rose;

The heavens, whose glory has not known increase
Since Raleigh swaggered home by lantern-light,
And Shakespeare looking upwards, knew the peace,
The cool deep peace of night.

Under these Heavens brave Wesley rose betimes
To preach ere daybreak to the tender soul,
And in the heart of Keats, the starry rhymes
Rolled, and for ever roll.

I too have walked with them the heavenly ways—
Tracing the sweet embroideries of the sky,
And I shall not forget, when arcs shall blaze,
And all the lights are high.

EDWARD SHILLITO

1915

56

A Girl's Song

THE Meuse and Marne have little waves;
The slender poplars o'er them lean.
One day they will forget the graves
That give the grass its living green.

Some brown French girl the rose will wear
That springs above his comely head;
Will twine it in her russet hair,
Nor wonder why it is so red.

His blood is in the rose's veins,
His hair is in the yellow corn.
My grief is in the weeping rains
And in the keening wind forlorn.

Flow softly, softly, Marne and Meuse;
Tread lightly, all ye browsing sheep;
Fall tenderly, O silver dews,
For here my dear Love lies asleep.

The earth is on his sealèd eyes,
The beauty marred that was my pride;
Would I were lying where he lies,
And sleeping sweetly by his side!

The Spring will come by Meuse and Marne,
The birds be blithesome in the tree.
I heap the stones to make his cairn
Where many sleep as sound as he.

KATHARINE TYNAN

57

If we return

(*Rondeau*)

IF we return, will England be
Just England still to you and me—
The place where we must earn our bread?
We, who have walked among the dead,
And watched the smile of agony,

And seen the price of Liberty,
Which we have taken carelessly
From other hands. Nay, we shall dread:
If we return,

Dread lest we hold blood-guiltily
The things that men have died to free.
Oh, English fields shall blossom red
For all the blood that has been shed,
By men whose guardians are we,
If we return.

F. W. HARVEY

58

I have a Rendezvous with Death . . .

I HAVE a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

1915

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

✠ Alan Seeger

59

Sons

I

WE have sent them forth
To Christ's own rood;
Their feet are white
On the fields of blood,
And they must slake
Their young desire
In wells of death
And pits of fire.

VALOUR AND VISION

The red cock crows
  And the grey cock crows,
And there is red
  On Flanders' snows;
And sun-scorched sand
  And thirsty clay
Drink a red spilth
  By Suvla Bay.

And where Azizeah's
  Turrets gleam,
And Tigris glitters,
  Like a dream,
Through nights of scent
  And tinkling sounds,
Sleep rose-white dead
  With rose-red wounds.

II

I saw the Shadow
  Count the fair
Sum of his takings;
  Them that were
Children in years
  When they were sped,
And now are mighty
  Being dead.

Like galaxies
  Of stars, they shone
In the great places
  They have won;
He sets them there
  No sting hath he,
And his is not
  The Victory.

And whom he spared
  I saw return,
Ambassadors
  From his brave bourne—
Strong with the wisdom
  Of the Wars,
Bright from the camps
  Of Conquerors.

T. W. H. Crosland

60

With Christ in Flanders

WE had forgotten You, or very nearly,
You did not seem to touch us very nearly,
Of course we thought about You now and then:
Especially in any time of trouble,
But we are very ordinary men.

And there were always other things to think of,
There 's lots of things a man has got to think of,
His work, his home, his pleasure and his wife:
And so we only thought of You on a Sunday,
Sometimes, perhaps, not even on a Sunday,
Because there 's always lots to fill one's life.

And all the while, in street, or lane, or by-way,
In country lane, in city street, or by-way,
You walked among us and we did not see.
Your feet were bleeding as You walked our pavements,
How did we miss Your Footprints on our pavements?
Can there be other folk as blind as we?

VALOUR AND VISION

Now we remember: over here in Flanders,
(It isn't strange to think of You in Flanders),
This hideous warfare seems to make things clear,
We never thought about You much in England,
But now that we are far away from England
We have no doubts, we know that You are here.

You helped to pass the jest along the trenches,
Where in cold blood we waited in the trenches,
You touched its ribaldry and made it fine.
You stood beside us in our pain and weakness,
We're glad to think You understand our weakness,
Somehow it seems to help us not to whine.

We think about You kneeling in the Garden,
Ah! God! the agony of that dread Garden,
We know You prayed for us upon the Cross.
If anything could make us glad to bear it,
'Twould be the knowledge that You willed to bear it,
Pain—death—the uttermost of human loss.

Though we forgot You—You will not forget us,
We feel so sure that You will not forget us,
But stay with us until this dream is past.
And so we ask for courage, strength and pardon,
Especially, I think we ask for pardon,
And that You'll stand beside us at the last.

LUCY WHITMELL

1915

61

Requiescant

IN lonely watches night by night
Great visions burst upon my sight,
For down the stretches of the sky
The hosts of dead go marching by.

Strange ghostly banners o'er them float,
Strange bugles sound an awful note,
And all their faces and their eyes
Are lit with starlight from the skies.

The anguish and the pain have passed
And peace hath come to them at last,
But in the stern looks linger still
The iron purpose and the will.

Dear Christ, who reign'st above the flood
Of human tears and human blood,
A weary road these men have trod,
O house them in the home of God.

F. G. Scott

62

How long, O Lord?

HOW long, O Lord, how long, before the flood
Of crimson-welling carnage shall abate?
From sodden plains in West and East, the blood
Of kindly men steams up in mists of hate,

Polluting Thy clean air; and nations great
In reputation of the arts that bind
The world with hopes of heaven, sink to the state
Of brute barbarians, whose ferocious mind
Gloats o'er the bloody havoc of their kind,
Not knowing love or mercy. Lord, how long
Shall Satan in high places lead the blind
To battle for the passions of the strong?
Oh, touch Thy children's hearts, that they may know
Hate their most hateful, pride their deadliest foe.

✠ Robert Palmer

63

In Flanders Fields

IN Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

✠ John McCrae

1916

Fall of Kut-el-Amara

Battle of Jutland

New Guinea

South-West Africa
East Africa

The Summer Offensive:
- *The Somme*
- *Thièpval*
- *Delville Wood*
- *Pozières*
- *Combles*

The Ancre
Beaumont Hamel

The Clearing of Sinai:
- *El Arish*
- *Magdaba*

1916

64

Who Sleeps?

MIDNIGHT and England; in the curtained room
Shadow upon grey shadow creeps
Till black, all-conquering, dominates the gloom
And darkness cries—who sleeps?

Who sleeps—the bride? She girt him for the fight
Gay when her happy warrior went,
Now empty arms she stretches to the night
With passionate lament.

Who sleeps—the old man? Up the wind-swept street
He heard a brown battalion come,
And all night long his weary, worn old feet
Keep measure with the drum.

Who sleeps—the mother? Immemorial throes
Torture her breast and laboured breath,
This hour, it may be, her beloved goes
Undaunted into death.

Who sleeps—the barren woman, for her breast
Passion, nor pain, nor rapture stirs?
She wakes, and watches for the first and best,
A thousand sons are hers.

On desolate far-off fields, who sleep?
We know not, but through summers green
We know their rigid hands that hold, will keep
The flag of England clean.

Who sleeps? Faint and foresworn, no sentinel
Between the trenches snarling lips;
Not one on guard where moonlit waters swell
Under the battleships.

Nor he that finds, sore wounded, all but slain,
Fevered from dreams of field and camp,
Cathedral like the solemn aisles of pain,
The woman and the lamp.

They sleep not for whom furnace smoke-clouds roll
Nor they who forge for England's care,
Armour laid on the anvil of her soul
And hammered out with prayer.

Who sleeps—your God on His eternal hill,
And Sion falls and Rachel weeps?
Captain of hosts and our Salvation still,
He slumbers not nor sleeps.

ELEANOR ALEXANDER

65

Liebestod

I WHO, conceived beneath another star,
Had been a prince and played with life, instead
Have been its slave, an outcast exiled far
From the fair things my faith has merited.
My ways have been the ways that wanderers tread
And those that make romance of poverty—
Soldier, I shared the soldier's board and bed,
And Joy has been a thing more oft to me
Whispered by summer wind and summer sea
Than known incarnate in the hours it lies
All warm against our hearts and laughs into our eyes.

1916

I know not if in risking my best days
I shall leave utterly behind me here
This dream that lightened me through lonesome ways
And that no disappointment made less dear;
Sometimes I think that, where the hilltops rear
Their white entrenchments back of tangled wire,
Behind the mist Death only can make clear,
There, like Brunhilde ringed with flaming fire,
Lies what shall ease my heart's immense desire:
There, where beyond the horror and the pain
Only the brave shall pass, only the strong attain.

✠ Alan Seeger

66

Home Thoughts in Laventie

GREEN gardens in Laventie!
Soldiers only know the street
Where the mud is churned and splashed about
By battle-wending feet;
And yet beside one stricken house there is a glimpse of grass.
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the church whose pitted spire
Seems balanced on a strand
Of swaying stone and tottering brick
Two roofless ruins stand,
And here behind the wreckage where the back wall should have been
We found a garden green.

The grass was never trodden on,
The little path of gravel
Was overgrown with celandine,
No other folk did travel
Along its weedy surface, but the nimble-footed mouse
Running from house to house.

So all among the vivid blades
Of soft and tender grass
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels
That pass and ever pass,
In noisy continuity until their stony rattle
Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from this ease
Of tranquil happy mind,
And searched the garden's little length
A fresh pleasaunce to find;
And there, some yellow daffodils and jasmine hanging high
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant
Of the many sweets we found,
Was a little bush of Daphne flower
Upon a grassy mound,
And so thick were the blossoms set, and so divine the scent
That we were well content.

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing
In that little lovely place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked and shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

1916

I saw green banks of daffodil
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-courting on the leas;
And meadows with their glittering streams, and silver scurrying dace,
Home—what a perfect place!

✠ Edward Wyndham Tennant

67

The Gift

MARCHING on Tanga, marching the parched plain
Of wavering spear-grass past Pangani river,
England came to me—me who had always ta'en
But never given before—England, the giver,
In a vision of three poplar trees that shiver
On still evenings of summer, after rain,
By Slapton Ley, where reed-beds start and quiver
When scarce a ripple moves the upland grain.
Then I thanked God that now I had suffered pain
And, as the parched plain, thirst, and lain awake
Shivering all night through till cold daybreak:
In that I count these sufferings my gain
And her acknowledgement. Nay, more, would fain
Suffer as many more for her sweet sake.

Francis Brett Young

68

Home Thoughts

THE hot red rocks of Aden
Stand from their burnished sea;
The bitter sands of Aden
Lie shimmering in their lee.

We have no joy of battle,
No honour here is won;
Our little fights are nameless,
With Turk and sand and gun.

East and West the greater wars
Swirl widely up and down;
Forgotten here and sadly
We hold the port and town.

The great round trees of England
Hurt us with vain desire;
The little wayside cottage,
The clanging blacksmith's fire.

The salt dry sands of Aden,
The bitter sun-cursed shore;
Forget us not in England,
We cannot serve you more.

ANON

1916

69

Evening in the Desert

THE mirage fades frail as a lovely dream
While as a flower of dreams the evening star
Grows bright at last; and now day's utmost gleam
Fades far beyond the waste—how far, how far?

Sharp to the tender sky the palm trees stand
Brushing with gentle fronds the evening star,
While bitter-sweet the wind blows o'er the sand,
The desert wind that blows how far—how far?

The winds of Fate across wide sea and land
From shade of Peace into the flame of War
Have borne us: and beyond—as grains of sand
The desert wind shall waft us far . . . how far?

HENRY BIRCH-REYNARDSON

70

Béte Humaine

RIDING through Ruwu swamp, about sunrise,
I saw the world awake; and as the ray
Touched the tall grasses where they dream till day,
Lo, the bright air alive with dragonflies,
With brittle wings aquiver, and great eyes
Piloting crimson bodies, slender and gay.
I aimed at one, and struck it, and it lay
Broken and lifeless, with fast-fading dyes. . . .

Then my soul sickened with a sudden pain
And horror, at my own careless cruelty,
That where all things are cruel I had slain
A creature whose sweet life it is to fly:
Like beasts that prey with bloody claw . . .
Nay, they
Must slay to live, but what excuse had I?

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

71

The Halt

'*MARK time in front! Rear fours cover! Company —halt!*
Order arms! Stand at—ease! Stand easy.' A sudden hush:
And then the talk began with a mighty rush—
'You weren't ever in step—The sergeant.—It wasn't my fault—
Well, the Lord be praised at least for a ten minutes' halt.'
We sat on a gate and watched them easing and shifting;
Out of the distance a faint, keen breath came drifting,
From the sea behind the hills, and the hedges were salt.

Where do you halt now? Under what hedge do you lie?
Where the tall poplars are fringing the white French roads?
And smoke I have not seen discolours the foreign sky?
Is the company resting there as we rested together
Stamping its feet and readjusting its loads
And looking with wary eyes at the drooping weather?

EDWARD SHANKS

1916

72

The Old Way

THERE'S a sea that lies uncharted far beyond the setting sun,
And a gallant Fleet was sailing there whose fighting days are done,
Sloop and Galleon, Brig and Pinnace, all the rigs you never met,
Fighting Frigate, grave Three-decker, with their snowy canvas set;
Dozed and dreamed, when, on a sudden, ev'ry sail began to swell,
For the breeze has spoken strangers, with a stirring tale to tell,
And a thousand eager voices flung the challenge out to sea:
'Come they hither in the old way, in the only way that 's free?'

And the flying Breeze called softly: 'In the old way,
Through the winters and the waters of the North,
They have waited, ah the waiting, in the old way,
Strong and patient, from the Pentlands to the Forth.
There was fog to blind and baffle off the headlands,
There were gales to beat the worst that ever blew,
But they took it, as they found it, in the old way,
And I know it often helped to think of you.'

'Twas a Frigate, under stun-sails, as she gently gathered way
Spoke in jerks, like all the Frigates, who have little time to stay:

'We'd to hurry, under Nelson, thank my timbers I was tough,
For he worked us as he loved us, and he never had enough.
Are the English mad as ever? were the Frigates just as few?
(Will their sheets be always stranding, ere the rigging 's rove anew?)
Just as Saxon slow at starting, just as weirdly wont to win?
Had they Frigates out and watching? Did they pass the signals in?'

And the laughing Breeze made answer: 'In the old way;
You should see the little cruisers spread and fly,
Peering over the horizon, in the old way,
And a seaplane up and wheeling in the sky.
When the wireless snapped "The enemy is sighted,"
If his accents were comparatively new,
Why, the sailor men were cheering, in the old way,
So I naturally smiled, and thought of you.'

Then a courtly voice and stately from a tall Three-decker came—
She'd the manners of a monarch and a story in her name;
'We'd a winter gale at even, and my shrouds are aching yet,
It was more than time for reefing when the upper sails were set.
So we chased in woeful weather, till we closed in failing light,
Then we fought them, as we caught them, just as Hawke had bid us fight;
And we swept the sea by sunrise, clear and free beyond a doubt.
Was it thus the matter ended when the enemy was out?'

Cried the Breeze: 'They fought and followed in the old way,
For they raced to make a record all the while,
With a knot to veer and haul on, in the old way,
That had never even met the measured mile—
And the guns were making merry in the twilight,
That the enemy was victor may be true,
Still—he hurried into harbour—in the old way—
And I wondered if he'd ever heard of you.'

Came a gruff and choking chuckle, and a craft as black as doom
Lumbered laughing down to leeward, as the bravest gave her room.
'Set 'un blazin', good your Lordships, for the tide be makin' strong,
Proper breeze to fan a fireship, set 'un drivin' out along!
'Tis the "Torch," wi' humble duty, from Lord Howard 'board the "Ark,"
We'm a laughin'-stock to Brixham, but a terror after dark,
Hold an' bilge anigh to burstin', pitch and sulphur, tar an' all,
Was it so, my dear, they'm fashioned for my Lord High Admiral?'

Cried the Breeze: 'You'd hardly know it from the old way
(Gloriana, did you waken at the fight?)
Stricken shadows, scared and flying in the old way
From the swift destroying spectres of the night,
There were some that steamed and scattered south for safety,
From the mocking western echo "Where be tu?"
There were some that—got the message—in the old way,
And the flashes in the darkness spoke of you.'

There 's a wondrous Golden Harbour, far beyond the setting sun,
Where a gallant ship may anchor when her fighting days are done,
Free from tempest, rock and battle, toil and tumult safely o'er,
Where the breezes murmur softly and there 's peace for evermore.
They have climbed the last horizon, they are standing in from sea,
And the Pilot makes the Haven where a ship is glad to be:
Comes at last the glorious greeting, strangely new and ages old,
See the sober grey is shining like the Tudor green and gold !

And the waiting jibs are hoisted, in the old way,
As the guns begin to thunder down the lines;
Hear the silver trumpets calling, in the old way !
Over all the silken pennons float and shine.
' Did you voyage all unspoken, small and lonely ?
Or with fame, the happy fortune of the few ?
So you win the Golden Harbour, in the old way,
There 's the old sea welcome waiting there for you.'

R. A. Hopwood

73

Lord Kitchener

UNFLINCHING hero, watchful to foresee
And face thy country's peril wheresoe'er,
Directing war and peace with equal care,
Till by long toil ennobled thou wert he

1916

Whom England call'd and bade 'Set my arm free
To obey my will and save my honour fair'—
What day the foe presumed on her despair
And she herself had trust in none but thee.
Among Herculean deeds the miracle
That massed the labour of ten years in one
Shall be thy monument. Thy work is done
Ere we could thank thee; and the high sea swell
Surgeth unheeding where thy proud ship fell
By the lone Orkneys at the set of sun.

ROBERT BRIDGES

74

Before Action

BY all the glories of the day
And the cool evening's benison,
By that last sunset touch that lay
Upon the hills when day was done,
By beauty lavishly outpoured
And blessings carelessly received,
By all the days that I have lived
Make me a soldier, Lord.

By all of all man's hopes and fears,
And all the wonders poets sing,
The laughter of unclouded years,
And every sad and lovely thing;
By the romantic ages stored
With high endeavour that was his
By all his mad catastrophes
Make me a man, O Lord.

I, that on my familiar hill
  Saw with uncomprehending eyes
A hundred of Thy sunsets spill
  Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword
  Must say good-bye to all of this;—
By all delights that I shall miss,
  Help me to die, O Lord.

✠ William Noel Hodgson

75

'On the Wings of the Morning'

A SUDDEN roar, a mighty rushing sound,
  a jolt or two, a smoothly sliding rise,
a tumbled blur of disappearing ground,
  and then all sense of motion slowly dies.
    Quiet and calm, the earth slips past below,
    as underneath a bridge still waters flow.

My turning wing inclines towards the ground;
  the ground itself glides up with graceful swing
and at the plane's far tip twirls slowly round,
  then drops from sight again beneath the wing
    to slip away serenely as before,
    a cubist-patterned carpet on the floor.

Hills gently sink and valleys gently fill.
  The flattened fields grow ludicrously small;
slowly they pass beneath and slower still
  until they hardly seem to move at all.
    Then suddenly they disappear from sight,
    hidden by fleeting wisps of faded white.

1916

The wing-tips, faint and dripping, dimly show,
blurred by the wreaths of mist that intervene.
Weird, half-seen shadows flicker to and fro
across the pallid fog—bank's blinding screen.
At last the choking mists release their hold,
and all the world is silver, blue, and gold.

The air is clear, more clear than sparkling wine;
compared with this, wine is a turgid brew.
The far horizon makes a clean-cut line
between the silver and the depthless blue.
Out of the snow-white level reared on high
glittering hills surge up to meet the sky.

Outside the wind screen's shelter gales may race:
but in the seat a cool and gentle breeze
blows steadily upon my grateful face.
As I sit motionless and at my ease,
contented just to loiter in the sun
and gaze around me till the day is done.

And so I sit, half sleeping, half awake,
dreaming a happy dream of golden days,
until at last, with a reluctant shake
I rouse myself, and with a lingering gaze
at all the splendour of the shining plain
make ready to come down to earth again.

The engine stops: a pleasant silence reigns—
silence, not broken, but intensified
by the soft, sleepy wires' insistent strains,
that rise and fall, as with a sweeping glide
I slither down the well-oiled sides of space,
towards a lower, less enchanted place.

The clouds draw nearer, changing as they come.
  Now, like a flash, fog grips me by the throat.
Down goes the nose: at once the wires' low hum
  begins to rise in volume and in note,
    till, as I hurtle from the choking cloud
    it swells into a scream, high-pitched, and loud.

The scattered hues and shades of green and brown
  fashion themselves into the land I know,
turning and twisting, as I spiral down
  towards the landing-ground; till, skimming low,
    I glide with slackening speed across the ground,
    and come to rest with lightly grating sound.

✠ Jeffery Day

76

From the Somme

IN other days I sang of simple things,
  Of summer dawn, and summer noon and night,
The dewy grass, the dew-wet fairy rings,
    The larks long golden flight.

Deep in the forest I made melody
  While squirrels cracked their hazel nuts on high,
Or I would cross the wet sand to the sea
    And sing to sea and sky.

When came the silvered silence of the night
  I stole to casements over scented lawns,
And softly sang of love and love's delight
    To mute white marble fauns.

1916

Oft in the tavern parlour I would sing
  Of morning sun upon the mountain vine,
And, calling for a chorus, sweep the string
    In praise of good red wine.

I played with all the toys the gods provide,
  I sang my songs and made glad holiday.
Now I have cast my broken toys aside
    And flung my lute away.

A singer once, I now am fain to weep.
  Within my soul I feel strange music swell,
Vast chants of tragedy too deep—too deep
    For my poor lips to tell.

✠ Leslie Coulson

77

Lines written in Captivity

IN England the leaves are falling from chestnut and
    beech and oak,
Where once 'mid mossgrown tree-trunks the ringing
    echoes woke,
As one brought down a rocketing pheasant, stopped a
    pigeon in its flight,
Or picked off a swerving woodcock as it sped into the
    night.

Oh for the smell of the mudflats when the autumn tide
    runs low,
As over the darkening waters the plovers come and go;

You can hear the whistling wigeon, see the teal as they
cross the moon,
And that ray of liquid silver—the splash of a diving loon.

India too is calling, where the black buck graze on the
plain,
Where the peacock struts 'neath the banyan and the
partridge calls from the cane,
Where the jackal howls in the twilight and the flighting
pintail wheel,
Where the geese fly up from the river, and, circling light
on the gheel.

When the haunting smell of the wood-smoke hangs low
o'er the village street,
And the dust drifts gold in the sunset, stirred by the
children's feet,
When the kites swing low round the temple, and the
egrets fly from the stream,
Over the silent mangoes where a myriad fireflies gleam.

These things have I known and have loved them—the
heat the dust and the sweat,
The rainswept lonely marshes, the tang of dung-smoke,—
and yet
If I should no more feel them, nor quaff the breeze like
wine,
The memory at least is with me—for ever, for ever mine.

F. J. Patmore

1916

78

The Homecoming of the Sheep

THE sheep are coming home in Greece,
Hark the bells on every hill!
Flock by flock, and fleece by fleece,
Wandering wide a little piece
Thro' the evening red and still,
Stopping where the pathways cease,
Cropping with a hurried will.

Thro' the cotton-bushes low
Merry boys with shouldered crooks
Close them in a single row,
Shout among them as they go
With one bell-ring o'er the brooks.
Such delight you never know
Reading it from gilded books.

Before the early stars are bright
Cormorants and sea-gulls call,
And the moon comes large and white
Filling with a lovely light
The ferny curtained waterfall.
Then sleep wraps every bell up tight
And the climbing moon grows small.

✠ Francis Ledwidge

79

Magpies in Picardy

THE magpies in Picardy
Are more than I can tell.
They flicker down the dusty roads
And cast a magic spell
On the men who march through Picardy,
Through Picardy to Hell.

(The blackbird flies with panic,
The swallow goes like light,
The finches move like ladies,
The owl floats by at night;
But the great and flashing magpie
He flies as artists might.)

A magpie in Picardy
Told me secret things—
Of the music in white feathers,
And the sunlight that sings
And dances in deep shadows—
He told me with his wings.

(The hawk is cruel and rigid,
He watches from a height;
The rook is slow and sombre,
The robin loves to fight;
But the great and flashing magpie
He flies as lovers might.)

He told me that in Picardy,
An age ago or more,
While all his fathers still were eggs,

1916

These dusty highways bore
Brown singing soldiers marching out
Through Picardy to war.

He said that still through chaos
Works on the ancient plan,
And two things have altered not
Since first the world began—
The beauty of the wild green earth
And the bravery of man.

(For the sparrow flies unthinking
And quarrels in his flight;
The heron trails his legs behind,
The lark goes out of sight;
But the great and flashing magpie
He flies as poets might.)

✠T. P. Cameron Wilson

80

To Tony—Aged Three

In Memory (T. P. C. W.)

GEMMED with white daisies was the great green world
Your restless feet have pressed this long day through—
Come now and let me whisper to your dreams
A little song grown from my love of you.

. . . . . .

There was a man once loved green fields like you,
He drew his knowledge from the wild birds' songs,
And he had praise for every beauteous thing,
And he had pity for all piteous wrongs. . . .

A lover of earth's forests—of her hills,
And brother to her sunlight—to her rain—
Man with a boy's fresh wonder. He was great
With greatness all too simple to explain.

He was a dreamer, and a poet, and brave
To face and hold what he alone found true.
He was a comrade of the old—a friend
To every little laughing child like you.

. . . . . .

And when across the peaceful English land
Unhurt by war, the light is growing dim
And you remember by your shadowed bed
All those—the brave—you must remember him;

And know it was for you who bear his name
And such as you that all his joy he gave,
His love of quiet fields, his youth, his life,
To win that heritage of peace you have.

MARJORIE WILSON

81

Nameless Men

AROUND me, when I wake or sleep,
Men strange to me their vigils keep;
And some were boys but yesterday,
Upon the village green at play.
Their faces I shall never know;
Like sentinels they come and go.
In grateful love I bend the knee
For nameless men who die for me.

1916

There is in earth or heaven no room
Where I may flee this dreadful doom.
For ever it is understood
I am a man redeemed by blood.
I must walk softly all my days
Down my redeemed and solemn ways.
Christ take the men I bring to Thee,
The men who watch and die for me.

EDWARD SHILLITO

82

The Belfries

IF you should go to La Bassée
Or Béthune grey and fair
You'd hear the sweetest bells that play
A faint and chiming air
And belfries in each little town
Sing out an hour and mark it down.

If you should go to La Bassée,
Or walk the Béthune street,
You'll see the lorries pass that way
And hear the tramp of feet,
And where the road with trees is lined
You'll watch the long battalions wind.

But all the clocks that mark the time
Are months and years too slow,
And all the bells that ring and chime
Strike hours of long ago.
The village belfries that you pass
Have crumbled in the dust and grass.

Yet still the long battalions wind
  Though all the men are gone.
Because one hour has stayed behind
  And wanders there alone.
Yes: one heroic, shining hour
Chimes on from every fallen tower.

ALYS FANE TROTTER

83

Lamplight

WE planned to shake the world together, you and I
Being young, and very wise;
Now in the light of the green shaded lamp
Almost I see your eyes
Light with the old gay laughter; you and I
Dreamed greatly of an Empire in those days,
Setting our feet upon laborious ways,
And all you asked of fame
Was crossed swords in the Army List,
My Dear, against your name.

We planned a great Empire together, you and I,
Bound only by the sea;
Now in the quiet of a chill Winter's night
Your voice comes hushed to me
Full of forgotten memories: you and I
Dreamed great dreams of our future in those days,
Setting our feet on undiscovered ways,
And all I asked of fame
A scarlet cross on my breast, my Dear,
For the swords by your name.

1916

We shall never shake the world together, you and I,
For you gave your life away;
And I think my heart was broken by the war,
Since on a summer day
You took the road we never spoke of: you and I
Dreamed greatly of an Empire in those days;
You set your feet upon the Western ways
And have no need of fame—
There's a scarlet cross on my breast, my Dear,
And a torn cross with your name.

MAY WEDDERBURN CANNAN

84

To a Distant One

THROUGH wild by-ways I come to you, my love,
Nor ask of those I meet the surest way,
What way I turn I cannot go astray
And miss you in my life. Though Fate may prove
A tardy guide she will not make delay
Leading me through strange seas and distant lands,
I'm coming still, though slowly, to your hands.
We'll meet one day.

There is so much to do, so little done,
In my life's space that I perforce did leave
Love at the moonlit trysting-place to grieve
Till fame and other little things were won.
I have missed much that I shall not retrieve,
Far will I wander yet with much to do.
Much will I spurn before I yet meet you,
So fair I can't deceive.

Your name is in the whisper of the woods
Like Beauty calling for a poet's song
To one whose harp had suffered many a wrong
In the lean hands of Pain. And when the broods
Of flower eyes waken all the streams along
In tender whiles, I feel most near to you:—
Oh, when we meet there shall be sun and blue
Strong as the spring is strong.

✠ Francis Ledwidge

85

From Generation to Generation

LONG since the sorrows of the nightingales
Came throbbing through the night to lattices
Where women watched whose amours had made rich
The days of soldiers now gone out in mail
And carven plate, with battleaxe and bow,
Faring and fallen, or happily to be
Home on some twilight road, a lonely spear. . . .

Long since, that so these ladies and their loves,
And casements looking on to battlefields
Where still a loyal crest might wear a rose,
Have perished, or grown fabulous, all song,
Or mist of mummers, or a crazy tale
For those book-learnèd fools who miss the world. . . .

There is a wood in Warwickshire to-day,
Haunted and hushed with midnight nightingales—
O summer song. And there are fields of France,
And fields, O love, by many an alien sea. . . .

John Drinkwater

1916

86

Two Fusiliers

AND have we done with War at last?
Well, we've been lucky devils both,
And there's no need of pledge or oath
To bind our lovely friendship fast,
By firmer stuff
Close bound enough.

By wire and wood and stake we're bound,
By Fricourt and by Festubert,
By whipping rain, by the sun's glare,
By all the misery and loud sound,
By a Spring day,
By Picard clay.

Show me the two so closely bound
As we, by the wet bond of blood,
By friendship, blossoming from mud,
By Death: we faced him, and we found
Beauty in Death,
In dead men breath.

ROBERT GRAVES

87

In Memoriam, A.H.

(*Auberon Herbert, Captain Lord Lucas, R.F.C., killed* 3 *November* 1916)

Νωμᾶται δ' ἐν ἀτρυγέτῳ χάει

THE wind had blown away the rain
That all day long had soaked the level plain.
Against the horizon's fiery wrack,
The sheds loomed black.
And higher, in their tumultuous concourse met,
The streaming clouds, shot-riddled banners, wet
With the flickering storm,
Drifted and smouldered, warm
With flashes sent
From the lower firmament.
And they concealed—
They only here and there through rifts revealed
A hidden sanctuary of fire and light,
A city of chrysolite.

We looked and laughed and wondered, and I said:
That orange sea, those oriflammes outspread
Were like the fanciful imaginings
That the young painter flings
Upon the canvas bold,
Such as the sage and the old
Make mock at, saying it could never be;
And you assented also, laughingly.
I wondered what they meant,
That flaming firmament,

1916

Those clouds so grey so gold, so wet so warm,
So much of glory and so much of storm,
The end of the world, or the end
Of the war—remoter still to me and you, my friend.

Alas! it meant not this, it meant not that:
It meant that now the last time you and I
Should look at the golden sky,
And the dark fields large and flat,
And smell the evening weather,
And laugh and talk and wonder both together.

The last, last time. We nevermore should meet
In France or London street,
Or fields of home. The desolated space
Of life shall nevermore
Be what it was before.
No one shall take your place.
No other face
Can fill that empty frame.
There is no answer when we call your name.
We cannot hear your shout upon the stair.
We turn to speak and find a vacant chair.
Something is broken which we cannot mend.
God has done more than take away a friend
In taking you; for all that we have left
Is bruised and irremediably bereft.
There is none like you. Yet not that alone
Do we bemoan;
But this; that you were greater than the rest,
And better than the best.

O liberal heart fast-rooted to the soil,
O lover of ancient freedom and proud toil,
Friend of the gipsies and all wandering song,

VALOUR AND VISION

The forest's nursling and the favoured child
Of woodlands wild—
O brother to the birds and all things free,
Captain of liberty!
Deep in your heart the restless seed was sown;
The vagrant spirit fretted in your feet;
We wondered could you tarry long,
And brook for long the cramping street,
Or would you one day sail for shores unknown,
And shake from you the dust of towns, and spurn
The crowded market-place—and not return?
You found a sterner guide;
You heard the guns. Then, to their distant fire,
Your dreams were laid aside;
And on that day, you cast your heart's desire
Upon a burning pyre;
You gave your service to the exalted need,
Until at last from bondage freed,
At liberty to serve as you loved best,
You chose the noblest way. God did the rest.

So when the spring of the world shall shrive our stain,
After the winter of war,
When the poor world awakes to peace once more,
After such night of ravage and of rain,
You shall not come again.
You shall not come to taste the old Spring weather,
To gallop through the soft untrampled heather,
To bathe and bake your body on the grass.
We shall be there, alas!
But not with you. When Spring shall wake the earth,
And quicken the scarred fields to the new birth,
Our grief shall grow. For what can Spring renew
More fiercely for us than the need of you?

That night I dreamt they sent for me and said
That you were missing, 'missing, missing—dead':

1916

I cried when in the morning I awoke,
And all the world seemed shrouded in a cloak;
But when I saw the sun,
And knew another day had just begun,
I brushed the dream away, and quite forgot
The nightmare's ugly blot.
So was the dream forgot. The dream came true.
Before the night I knew
That you had flown away into the air
Forever. Then I cheated my despair.
I said
That you were safe—or wounded—but not dead.
Alas! I knew
Which was the false and true.

And after days of watching, days of lead,
There came the certain news that you were dead.
You had died fighting, fighting against odds,
Such as in war the gods
Ethereal dared when all the world was young;
Such fighting as blind Homer never sung,
Nor Hector nor Achilles never knew;
High in the empty blue.
High, high, above the clouds, against the setting sun,
The fight was fought, and your great task was done.

Of all your brave adventures this the last
The bravest was and best;
Meet ending to a long embattled past,
This swift, triumphant, fatal quest,
Crowned with the wreath that never perisheth,
And diadem of honourable death;
Swift Death aflame with offering supreme
And mighty sacrifice,
More than all mortal dream;

A soaring death, and near to Heaven's gate;
Beneath the very walls of Paradise.
Surely with soul elate,
You heard the destined bullet as you flew,
And surely your prophetic spirit knew
That you had well deserved that shining fate.

Here is no waste,
No burning Might-have-been,
No bitter after-taste,
None to censure, none to screen,
Nothing awry, nor anything misspent;
Only content, content beyond content,
Which hath not any room for betterment.

God, Who made you valiant, strong and swift,
And maimed you with a bullet long ago,
And cleft your riotous ardour with a rift,
And checked your youth's tumultuous overflow,
Gave back your youth to you,
And packed in moments rare and few
Achievements manifold
And happiness untold,
And bade you spring to Death as to a bride,
In manhood's ripeness, power, and pride,
And on your sandals the strong wings of youth.
He let you leave a name
To shine on the entablatures of truth,
Forever:
To sound forever in answering halls of fame.

For you soared onwards to that world which rags
Of clouds, like tattered flags,
Concealed; you reached the walls of chrysolite,
The mansions white;

And losing all, you gained the civic crown
Of that eternal town,
Wherein you passed a rightful citizen
Of the bright commonwealth ablaze beyond our ken.

Surely you found companions meet for you
In that high place;
You met there face to face
Those you had never known, but whom you knew;
Knights of the Table Round,
And all the very brave, the very true,
With chivalry crowned;
The captains rare,
Courteous and brave beyond our human air;
Those who had loved and suffered overmuch,
Now free from the world's touch.
And with them were the friends of yesterday,
Who went before and pointed you the way;
And in that place of freshness, light and rest,
Where Lancelot and Tristram vigil keep
Over their King's long sleep,
Surely they made a place for you,
Their long-expected guest,
Among the chosen few,
And welcomed you, their brother and their friend,
To that companionship which hath no end.

And in the portals of the sacred hall
You hear the trumpet's call,
At dawn upon the silvery battlement,
Re-echo through the deep
And bid the sons of God to rise from sleep,
And with a shout to hail
The sunrise on the city of the Grail:
The music that proud Lucifer in Hell

Missed more than all the joys that he forwent.
You hear the solemn bell
At vespers, when the oriflammes are furled ;
And then you know that somewhere in the world,
That shines far-off beneath you like a gem,
They think of you, and when you think of them
You know that they will wipe away their tears,
And cast aside their fears ;
That they will have it so,
And in no otherwise ;
That it is well with them because they know,
With faithful eyes,
Fixed forward and turned upwards to the skies,
That it is well with you,
Among the chosen few,
Among the very brave, the very true.

MAURICE BARING

88

The March

I HEARD a voice that cried, 'Make way for those who died !'
And all the coloured crowd like ghosts at morning fled ;
And down the waiting road, rank after rank there strode,
In mute and measured march a hundred thousand dead.

A hundred thousand dead, with firm and noiseless tread,
All shadowy-grey yet solid, with faces grey and ghast,
And by the house they went, and all their brows were bent
Straight forward ; and they passed, and passed, and passed, and passed.

But O there came a place, and O there came a face,
That clenched my heart to see it, and sudden turned my
way;
And in the Face that turned I saw two eyes that burned,
Never-forgotten eyes, and they had things to say.

Like desolate stars they shone one moment, and were gone,
And I sank down and put my arms across my head,
And felt them moving past, nor looked to see the last,
In steady silent march, our hundred thousand dead.

J. C. Squire

89

Length of Days

To the Early Dead in Battle

THERE is no length of days
But yours, boys who were children once. Of old
The Past beset you in your childish ways,
With sense of Time untold.

What have you then forgone?
A history? This you had. Or memories?
These, too, you had of your far-distant dawn.
No further dawn seems his,

The old man who shares with you,
But has no more, no more. Time's mystery
Did once for him the most that it can do:
He has had infancy.

And all his dreams, and all
His loves for mighty Nature, sweet and few,
Are but the dwindling past he can recall
Of what his childhood knew.

He counts not any more
His brief, his present years. But O he knows
How far apart the summers were of yore,
How far apart the snows.

Therefore be satisfied;
Long life is in your treasury ere you fall;
Yes, and first love, like Dante's. O a bride
For ever mystical!

Irrevocable good,—
You dead, and now about, so young, to die,—
Your childhood was; there Space, there Multitude,
There dwelt Antiquity.

ALICE MEYNELL

1917

Recapture of Kut-el-Amara
Entry into Bagdad

Péronne
Arras
Vimy Ridge
Messines
Passchendaele
Cambrai

The Italian Campaign

Salonika
Macedonia

Battle of Beersheba
Surrender of Jaffa
Capture of Jerusalem

1917

90

This Generation

THEIR youth was fevered—passionate, quick to drain
The last few pleasures from the cup of life
Before they turn'd to suck the dregs of pain
And end their young-old lives in mortal strife.
They paid the debts of many a hundred year
Of foolishness and riches in alloy.
They went to death; nor did they shed a tear
For all they sacrificed of love and joy.
Their tears ran dry when they were in the womb,
For, entering life—they found it was their tomb.

OSBERT SITWELL

91

Anthem for Doomed Youth

WHAT passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

WILFRED OWEN

92

In the Trenches

I

NOT that we are weary,
Not that we fear,
Not that we are lonely
Though never alone—
Not these, not these destroy us;
But that each rush and crash
Of mortar and shell,
Each cruel bitter shriek of bullet
That tears the wind like a blade,
Each wound on the breast of earth,
Of Demeter, our Mother,
Wound us also,
Sever and rend the fine fabric
Of the wings of our frail souls,
Scatter into dust the bright wings
Of Psyche!

II

Impotent,
How impotent is all this clamour,
This destruction and contest. . . .

1917

Night after night comes the moon
Haughty and perfect;
Night after night the Pleiades sing
And Orion swings his belt across the sky.
Night after night the frost
Crumbles the hard earth.

Soon the spring will drop flowers
And patient creeping stalk and leaf
Along these barren lines
Where the huge rats scuttle
And the hawk shrieks to the carrion crow.

Can you stay them with your noise?
Then kill winter with your cannon,
Hold back Orion with your bayonets
And crush the spring leaf with your armies!

RICHARD ALDINGTON

93

Aeroplanes

IRON birds floating in the sky
Prey remorselessly
On the tiny, obscure dot
That is some great city,
Below, men-insects rend and tear,
Women wring hands of pity.

VALOUR AND VISION

I have flown a hundred miles
  Over the blurred plain,
Dropping devastation and death,
  Blotting men's nerves with pain—
Their miserable cries were as tiny as insects'
  Calling their God in vain.

The sounds of their oaths and lamentations
  Could not even reach up to me,
The clouds were at peace, no tribulation
  Disturbed the sky-harmony,
Only my buzzing engine clanged
  And my heart beat dreadfully.

I laughed as I silently tossed blind Death
  Down on that insect people,
Dreadful it was in the peaceful sky
  To murder that insect people,
And never to hear a sound or cry
  Or a bell toll in a steeple.

I laughed when my last bloody bomb had gone,
  I shrieked high up in a cloud,
I wanted to fly in the face of their God
  And spit my disdain aloud,
I ripped through the terrified whistling air
  And burst through the earth's damp shroud.

Ah! it was blue there, wide and clear,
  Dancing alive in the sun,
And millions of bright, sweet cymbals rang
  Praising the deeds I had done,
And millions of angels cheering stood
  Deep-columned around the Sun.

And then I stood erect and cheered,
  Ay! shouted into the sky,
I filled the vast semicircle round
  There was only the Sun and I,
The round, red, glittering, blazing Sun
  And a fluttering human fly.

W. J. Turner

94

Mesopotamia

NOON—Madhij.

THE clouds are gathered and the wind blows, wet with
  tears,
The River is ruffled grey,
And swept in a curve like a sinister steel blade
Tapering slimly away.
In the hand of Destiny this sword severs our years,
Sunders the light and shade.

DUSK—Falluja.

A long lean cloud, like a greyhound,
Chases a fading sun;
The plain turns black, and the wave turns gold,
Then dark, and the day is done.
And the bats swing out in circles,
And the stars wake, one by one.

J. Griffyth Fairfax

95

Sir Stanley Maude

HAIL and farewell, across the clash of swords!
Hail and farewell, the laurels to the dust,
So soon returned, so bitterly; farewell!

The dark clouds, sisters to the solemn hour,
Wait on thy passing, and the heavy air
Bears, as we bear our sorrows, silently
The leaden burden, and there is no voice—
Mute, with bent heads, before the open grave,
We stand, and each one feels his pulses ache,
And his throat parches, and the unspoken grief
Closes an iron hand upon his heart,
Three times the volley strikes the solemn vault
Of that imprisoning arch, and piercing clear
The bugles cry upon the dead, 'Arise!'

And thou shalt rise, yet we turn sadly away;
The scarlet and blue pennants droop; the night
Draws darkly on, and dawn, when dawn shall come,
Throws a drear light upon the Eastern sky,
And Dome and Minaret wake ghostly grey,
And in the palms a little wind goes sighing.

Hail and farewell; the laurels with the dust
Are levelled, but thou hast thy surer crown,
Peace, and immortal calm, the victory won;
Somewhere serene thy watchful power inspires;
Thou art a living purpose, being dead,
Fruitful of nobleness in lesser lives,
A guardian and a guide; Hail and farewell!

J. Griffyth Fairfax

1917

96

The Forest of the Dead

(*Bagdad Military Cemetery*)

THERE are strange trees in that pale field
Of barren soil and bitter yield:
They stand without the city walls;
Their nakedness is unconcealed.

Cross after cross, mound after mound,
And no flowers blossom but are bound,
The dying and the dead, in wreaths,
Sad crowns for kings of Underground.

The Forest of the Dead is still,
No song of birds can ever thrill
Among the sapless boughs that bear
No fruit, no flower, for good or ill.

The sun by day, the moon by night
Give terrible or tender light,
But night or day the forest stands
Unchanging, desolately bright.

With loving or unloving eye
Kinsman and alien pass them by:
Do the dead know, do the dead care,
Under the forest as they lie?

To each the tree above his head,
To each the sign in which is said . . .
'By this thou art to overcome':
Under this forest sleep no dead.

These, having life, gave life away:
Is God less generous than they?
The spirit passes and is free:
Dust to the dust; Death takes the clay.

J. Griffyth Fairfax

97

In France

THE silence of maternal hills
Is round me in my evening dreams;
And round me music-making bills
And mingling waves of pastoral streams.

Whatever way I turn I find
The path is old unto me still.
The hills of home are in my mind,
And there I wander as I will.

✠ Francis Ledwidge

98

An Irish Airman Foresees his Death

I KNOW that I shall meet my fate
Somewhere among the clouds above;
Those that I fight I do not hate,
Those that I guard I do not love;

1917

My country is Kiltartan Cross,
My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
No likely end could bring them loss
Or leave them happier than before.
Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
A lonely impulse of delight
Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
I balanced all, brought all to mind,
The years to come seemed waste of breath,
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death.

W. B. Yeats

99

The Ragged Stone

AS I was walking with my dear, my dear come back at last,
The shadow of the Ragged Stone fell on us as we passed:

And if the tale be true they tell about the Ragged Stone
I'll not be walking with my dear next year, nor yet alone.

And we're to wed come Michaelmas, my lovely dear and I;
And we're to have a little house, and do not want to die.

But all the folk are fighting in the lands across the sea,
Because the King and counsellors went mad in Germany.

Because the King and counsellors went mad, my love and I
May never have a little house before we come to die.

And if the tale be true they tell about the Ragged Stone
I'll not be walking with my dear next year, nor yet alone.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

100

Dreamers

SOLDIERS are citizens of death's grey land,
Drawing no dividend from time's to-morrows.
In the great hour of destiny they stand,
Each with his feuds, and jealousies, and sorrows.
Soldiers are sworn to action; they must win
Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.
Soldiers are dreamers; when the guns begin
They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and wives.

I see them in foul dug-outs, gnawed by rats,
And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,
Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,
And mocked by hopeless longing to regain
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
And going to the office in the train.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

101

To a Bulldog

(*W. H. S., Capt.* (*Acting Major*) *R.F.A.; killed 12 April* 1917.)

WE sha'n't see Willy any more, Mamie,
He won't be coming any more:
He came back once and again and again,
But he won't get leave any more.

We looked from the window and there was his cab,
And we ran downstairs like a streak,
And he said 'Hullo, you bad dog,' and you crouched to the floor,
Paralysed to hear him speak,

And then let fly at his face and his chest
Till I had to hold you down,
While he took off his cap and his gloves and his coat
And his bag and his thonged Sam Browne.

We went upstairs to the studio,
The three of us, just as of old,
And you lay down and I sat and talked to him
As round the room he strolled.

Here in the room where, years ago
Before the old life stopped,
He worked all day with his slippers and his pipe,
He would pick up the threads he'd dropped,

Fondling all the drawings he had left behind,
  Glad to find them all still the same,
And opening the cupboards to look at his belongings
  . . . Every time he came.

But now I know what a dog doesn't know,
  Though you'll thrust your head on my knee,
And try to draw me from the absent-mindedness
  That you find so dull in me.

And all your life you will never know
  What I wouldn't tell you even if I could,
That the last time we waved him away
  Willy went for good.

But sometimes as you lie on the hearthrug
  Sleeping in the warmth of the stove,
Even through your muddled old canine brain
  Shapes from the past may rove.

You'll scarcely remember, even in a dream,
  How we brought home a silly little pup,
With a big square head and little crooked legs
  That could scarcely bear him up.

But your tail will tap at the memory
  Of a man whose friend you were,
Who was always kind though he called you a naughty dog
  When he found you on his chair;

Who'd make you face a reproving finger
  And solemnly lecture you
Till your head hung downwards and you looked very sheepish!
  And you'll dream of your triumphs too.

1917

Of summer evening chases in the garden
  When you dodged us all about with a bone:
We were three boys, and you were the cleverest,
  But now we're two alone.

When summer comes again,
  And the long sunsets fade,
We shall have to go on playing the feeble game for two
  That since the war we've played.

And though you run expectant as you always do
  To the uniforms we meet,
You'll never find Willy among all the soldiers
  In even the longest street,

Nor in any crowd; yet, strange and bitter thought,
  Even now were the old words said,
If I tried the old trick and said 'Where's Willy?'
  You would quiver and lift your head,

And your brown eyes would look to ask if I were serious,
  And wait for the word to spring.
Sleep undisturbed: I sha'n't say *that* again,
  You innocent old thing.

I must sit, not speaking, on the sofa,
  While you lie asleep on the floor;
For he's suffered a thing that dogs couldn't dream of,
  And he won't be coming here any more.

J. C. Squire

102

The Trumpet

RISE up, rise up,
And, as the trumpet blowing
Chases the dreams of men,
As the dawn glowing
The stars that left unlit
The land and water,
Rise up and scatter
The dew that covers
The print of last night's lovers—
Scatter it, scatter it!

While you are listening
To the clear horn,
Forget, men, everything
On this earth newborn,
Except that it is lovelier
Than any mysteries.
Open your eyes to the air
That has washed the eyes of the stars
Through all the dewy night:
Up with the light,
To the old wars;
Arise, arise!

✠ EDWARD THOMAS

1917

103

Lights Out

I HAVE come to the borders of sleep,
The unfathomable deep
Forest where all must lose
Their way, however straight,
Or winding, soon or late;
They cannot choose.

Many a road and track
That, since the dawn's first crack,
Up to the forest brink,
Deceived the travellers
Suddenly now blurs,
And in they sink.

Here love ends,
Despair, ambition ends,
All pleasure and all trouble,
Although most sweet or bitter,
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter
Than tasks most noble.

There is not any book
Or face of dearest look
That I would not turn from now
To go into the unknown
I must enter and leave alone
I know not how.

The tall forest towers;
Its cloudy foliage lowers

Ahead, shelf above shelf;
Its silence I hear and obey
That I may loose my way
And myself.

✠ Edward Thomas

104

To E. T.: 1917

YOU sleep too well—too far away,
For sorrowing word to soothe or wound;
Your very quiet seems to say
How longed-for a peace you have found.

Else, had not death so lured you on,
You would have grieved—'twixt joy and fear—
To know how my small loving son
Had wept for you, my dear.

Walter de la Mare

105

Meditation in June, 1917

I

HOW can we reason still, how look afar,
Who, these three years now, are
Drifting, poor flotsam hugely heaved and hurled
In the birthday of a world,

Upon the waves of the creative sea?
  How gain lucidity
Or even keep the faith wherewith at first
  We met the storm that burst,
The singing hope of revolution's prime?
  For in that noble time
We saw the petty world dissolve away
  And fade into a day
Where dwelt new spirits of a better growth,
  Unchecked by spite and sloth.
We saw, and even now we seem to see
  In fitful revery,
Like hills obscured and hid by earthly mist,
  The hopes that first we kissed:
We see them—catch at them and lose again
  In apathy and pain
What maybe was (though it once seemed ours to hold)
  No more than fairy gold.

II

We pity those whom quick death overtakes,
  Though they will never see
How hope dissolves and founded loyalty shakes
  Traitorously, piteously.
They lose at most and death is voiceless still
  Nor whispers in their ears
When they are lying on the deep-scarred hill
  What our calm silence hears.
They lose all various life, they lose the day,
  The clouds, the winds, the rain,
The blossoms down an English road astray
  They will not see again;
Great is their loss, but more tremendous things
  To us at home are given,
Doubts, fears and greeds and shameful waverings
  That hide the blood-red heaven.

They knew no doubt and fear was soon put by:
  Freely their souls could move
In deeds that gave new life to loyalty,
  A sharper edge to love.
They are the conquerors, the happy dead,
  Who gave their lives away,
And now amid the trenches where they bled,
  Forgetful of the day,
Deaf, blind and unaware, sleep on and on,
  Nor open eyes to weep,
Know nought of what is ended or begun
  But only and always sleep.

III

We said on that first day, we said and swore
  That self should be no more,
That we were risen, that we would wholly be
  For love and liberty;
And in the exhilaration of that oath
  We cast off spite and sloth
And laboured for an hour, till we began,
  Man after piteous man,
To lose the splendour, to forget the dream
  And leave our noble theme,
To find again our lusts and villainies
  And seek a baser prize;
This we have done and what is left undone
  Cries out beneath the sun.
How glad a dawn fades thus in foggy night,
  Where not a star shines bright!

IV

Is all then gone? That nobler morning mood
When pain appeared an honour and grief a gift
And what was difficult was also good?
Are all our wishes on the waves adrift?

1917

The young, the eager-hearted, they are gone,
And we, the stay-at-homes, are tired and old,
Careless how carelessly our work is done,
Forgetful how that morning rose in gold
When all our hearts cried out in unison,
Triumphant in the new triumphal sun.
How dull a night succeeds! how dark and cold!
We will arise. Oh, not as then with singing,
But silence in our mouths and no word said,
Though wracks of that lost glory round us clinging
Shame us with broken oaths we swore the dead,
But steadfast in humility we rise,
Hoping no glory, having merited none,
Through the long night to toil with aching eyes
And pray that our humbler hearts may earn the sun.

EDWARD SHANKS

106

Chemin des Dames

IN silks and satins the ladies went
Where the breezes sighed and the poplars bent,
Taking the air of a Sunday morn
Midst the red of poppies and gold of corn—
Flowery ladies in stiff brocades,
With negro pages and serving-maids,
In scarlet coach or in gilt sedan,
With brooch and buckle and flounce and fan,
Patch and powder and trailing scent,
Under the trees the ladies went—
Lovely ladies that gleamed and glowed,
As they took the air on the Ladies' Road.

Boom of thunder and lightning flash—
The torn earth rocks to the barrage crash;
The bullets whine and the bullets sing
From the mad machine-guns chattering;
Black smoke rolling across the mud,
Trenches plastered with flesh and blood—
The blue ranks lock with the ranks of grey,
Stab and stagger and sob and sway;
The living cringe from the shrapnel bursts,
The dying moan of their burning thirsts,
Moan and die in the gulping slough—
Where are the butterfly ladies now?

CROSBIE GARSTIN

107

Pierrot at the War

THE leaden years have dragged themselves away;
The blossoms of the world lie all dash'd down
And flattened by the hurricane of death:
The roses fallen, and their fragrant breath
Has passed beyond our senses—and we drown
Our tragic thoughts: confine them to the day.

Pierrot was happy here two years ago,
Singing through all the summer-scented hours,
Dancing throughout the warm moon-haunted night.
Swan-like his floating sleeves, so long and white,
Sailed the blue waters of the dusk. Wan flowers,
Like moons, perfumed the crystal valley far below.

But now these moonlit sleeves lie on the ground,
  Trampled and torn from many a deadly fight.
With fingers clenched, and face a mask of stone,
He gazes at the sky—left all alone—
  Grimacing under every rising light:
His body waits the peace his soul has found.

OSBERT SITWELL

108

Casualty

THEY are bringing him down,
  He looks at me wanly.
The bandages are brown,
Brown with mud, red only—
But how deep a red! in the breast of the shirt,
Deepening red too, as each whistling breath
Is drawn with the suck of a slow-filling squirt
While waxen cheeks waste to the pallor of death.

O my comrade!
My comrade that you could rest
Your tired body on mine, that your head might be laid
Fallen and heavy—upon this my breast,
That I might take your hands in my hands
To chafe! That abandoned your body might sink
Upon mine, which here helplessly, grievously stands;
That your body might drink
Warmth from my body, strength from my veins,
Life from my heart that monstrously beats,
Beats, beats and strains

After you vainly!
The trench curves. They are gone.
The steep rain teems down.

O, my companion!
Who were you? How did you come,
Looking so wanly upon me? I know—
And O, how immensely long I have known—
Those aching eyes, numb face, gradual gloom,
That depth without groan!

Take now my love—this love which alone
I can give you—and shed without pain—
That life if I could I would succour,
Even as it were
This, this, my poor own!

ROBERT NICHOLS

109

Attack

AT dawn the ridge emerges massed and dun
In the wild purple of the glowering sun
Smouldering through spouts of drifting smoke that shroud
The menacing scarred slope; and, one by one,
Tanks creep and topple forward to the wire.
The barrage roars and lifts. Then, clumsily bowed
With bombs and guns and shovels and battle-gear,
Men jostle and climb to meet the bristling fire.
Lines of grey, muttering faces, masked with fear,

1917

They leave their trenches, going over the top,
While time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,
And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,
Flounders in mud. O Jesu, make it stop!

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

110

From Albert to Bapaume

LONELY and bare and desolate,
Stretches of muddy filtered green,
A silence half articulate
Of all that those dumb eyes have seen.

A battered trench, a tree with boughs
Smutted and black with smoke and fire,
A solitary ruined house,
A crumped mass of rusty wire.

And scarlet by each ragged fen
Long scattered ranks of poppies lay,
As though the blood of the dead men
Had not been wholly washed away.

ALEC WAUGH

III

Palestine

HOW strange if it should fall to you,
To me, our boys should do the deed
The great Crusaders failed to do!
To win Christ's Sepulchre: to bleed,
So the immortal dream come true.

What ghosts now throng the Holy Ground,
With rusted armour, dinted sword,
Listening? The earth shakes with the sound;
The wind brings hither a fierce word:
To arms, to arms, Sons of Mahound!

In many a quiet cloister grey
Cross-legged Crusaders, men of stone,
Quiver and stir the Eastward way,
As they would spring up and be gone
To the Great Day, to the Great Day.

Godfrey and Lion-Heart and all
The splendours of the faithful years
Watch our young sons from the Knights' stall,
Ready to clap hands to their spears
If ill befall, if ill befall.

They say: *It is the Child's Crusade*
Was talked of in our early Spring.
St. George, St. Denis, to their aid!
That was a boy's voice challenging,
Shrill like a bugle, unafraid!

Most wonderful, if your son, my son,
  Should win the Holy Thing at last!
The might of Heathenesse be undone,
  The strong towers down, the gate unfast,
Lord Christ come to His own, His own.

KATHARINE TYNAN

112

The Crusader's Tomb

O NAMELESS warrior, whose feet
  Have borne thee to thy goal,
Pray thou for me, while dust and heat
  Lie heavy on my soul!

Here, in what heritage of ease,
  The years give rest to them,
Because of old thy crossèd knees
  Knelt in Jerusalem!

And tell me, were the gates of pearl?
  And were the streets of gold?
And did the Tree of Life unfurl
  Leaves lovely to behold?

Shone she with jewels round about
  Her deeply-founded wall,
Making her very stones cry out
  Of Love who died for all?

And did the vision of that Mount
  Kindle in thee such flame
That Grief forgot her old account
  When home the warrior came?

And did the face of past desire
  Seem then an empty show,
Giving to lips which once were fire
  A form more white than snow?

O dear acquaintance of that spot,
  Befriend an exile's prayer!
So shall the heart that sees it not
  Be as it had been there.

Let far-off good which was my trust
  Bring healing to mine eyes,
Or make me even as the dust
  In Holy Land that lies!

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

113

The Great Company

PERPETUA, Felicitas,
  And all the strong and steadfast saints
Whose names are mentioned in the Mass:

I thought of you as aureoled
Like those the old Italian paints
In filmy garments fringed with gold;

I thought of you all in a row
In rainbow-coloured drapery,
Like Saints of Fra Angelico.

But now I know you; tender friends
Who come about us when we die,
And when we're wounded make amends.

1917

Your martyred blood was once the seed
You gladly gave for Christ to sow.
Now others die for others' need.

But in their lesser blinder way
They make an offering as good.
And you'll bend down and with them stay;

Bend down, as patient nurses bend
When men are needing drink or food,
And help them at the very end;

Bend down with beautiful glad names,
(And one to me is very dear,
I have a special claim on him).

Barnabas, Agnes, Agatha,
Stephen, Ignatius, be you near,
Lucy and Anastasia!

You, broken in the circus ring,
Torn by wild beasts and crucified,
You'll pity all their suffering.

Maybe, they had no time to say
One little prayer before they died.
But you'll be there with them to pray.

Maybe, they had no time to pray,
Who stemmed the hostile tide for us.
But you'll be with them on their way;

And tell them that we're glad they died,
And that we know they died for us,
And so they will be satisfied.

John, Marcellinus, Cicely,
You who have loved and suffered thus,
Admit them to your Company:
Tell them we know they died for us.

ALYS FANE TROTTER

114

A Lament

WE who are left, how shall we look again
Happily on the sun, or feel the rain,
Without remembering how they who went
Ungrudgingly, and spent
Their all for us, loved, too, the sun and rain?

A bird among the rain-wet lilac sings—
But we, how shall we turn to little things
And listen to the birds and winds and streams
Made holy by their dreams,
Nor feel the heart-break in the heart of things?

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

115

Greater Love

RED lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wooed and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.
O Love, your eyes lose lure
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!

Your slender attitude
Trembles not exquisite like limbs knife-skewed,
Rolling and rolling there
Where God seems not to care;
Till the fierce Love they bear
Cramps them in death's extreme decrepitude.

Your voice sings not so soft,—
Though even as wind murmuring through raftered loft,—
Your dear voice is not dear,
Gentle, and evening clear,
As theirs whom none now hear
Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that coughed.

Heart, you were never hot,
Nor large, nor full like hearts made great with shot;
And though your hand be pale,
Paler are all which trail
Your cross through flame and hail:
Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not.

✠ Wilfred Owen

116

Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries

THESE, in the day when heaven was falling,
The hour when earth's foundations fled,
Followed their mercenary calling
And took their wages and are dead.

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;
They stood, and earth's foundations stay;
What God abandoned, these defended,
And saved the sum of things for pay.

A. E. HOUSMAN

1918

The Last Retreat:
- *Soissons*
- *Second Battle of the Marne*
- *Amiens*
- *Armentières*

Zeebrugge
Ostende

The Macedonian Offensive

Capture of Damascus
Entry into Aleppo

Victory on the Piave

The Last Advance:
- *Lille*
- *St. Quentin*
- *Le Cateau*
- *Mons*

November 11th

1918

117

To Him whom the Cap fits

(*'What sword is left?' sighs England. Answer her (for you must answer) 'This—Excalibur.'*)

I

THAT is the sword of England. Arthur drew
The blade at that last battle when he failed,
(Shadow among the shadows, who prevailed
Victorious in disaster). Harold knew
Its point in his heart at Hastings, and it flew
Out of the scabbard when King Richard sailed
And did not reach Jerusalem. It wailed
In the false hand that on the scaffold slew
Charles, and proud Balliol saw the light on it
Shining for Ridley through the flame; was seen
When Mary, Queen of Scotland, was a queen
On earth no longer, and when William Pitt
'England! O how I leave thee,' failing cried,
The sword, the sword, was with him when he died.

II

The line at Mons were privy to the blade,
When God and England seemed together lost,
And riding by the far Pacific coast
Admiral Cradock took its accolade.
These are its victories—to be afraid,
To hear thin bugles sounding 'The Last Post,'
Until the blood creeps noiseless as a ghost
And cold, and all we cherished is betrayed.

That is the sword's way. Those who lose shall have;
And only those who in defeat have known
The bitterness of death, and stood alone
In darkness, shall have worship in the grave.
Swordsman, go into battle, and record
How one more English knight has found his sword!

HUMBERT WOLFE

118

'Lord, I owe Thee a Death'

Richard Hooker.

MAN pays that debt with new munificence,
Not piecemeal now, not slowly, by the old:
Not grudgingly, by the effaced thin pence,
But greatly and in gold.

ALICE MEYNELL

119

Motley

COME, Death, I'd have a word with thee;
And thou, poor Innocency;
And Love—a lad with broken wing;
And Pity, too:
The Fool shall sing to you,
As Fools will sing.

1918

Ay, music hath small sense,
And a tune's soon told,
And Earth is old,
And my poor wits are dense;
Yet have I secrets,—dark, my dear,
To breathe you all: Come near.
And lest some hideous listener tells,
I'll ring my bells.

They're all at war!—
Yes, yes, their bodies go
'Neath burning sun and icy star
To chaunted songs of woe,
Dragging cold cannon through a mire
Of rain and blood and spouting fire,
The new moon glinting hard on eyes
Wide with insanities!

Hush! . . . I use words
I hardly know the meaning of;
And the mute birds
Are glancing at Love
From out their shade of leaf and flower,
Trembling at treacheries
Which even in noonday cower.
Heed, heed not what I said
Of frenzied hosts of men,
More fools than I,
On envy, hatred fed,
Who kill, and die—
Spake I not plainly, then?
Yet Pity whispered, 'Why?'

Thou silly thing, off to thy daisies go.
Mine was not news for child to know,

And Death—no ears hath. He hath supped where creep
Eyeless worms in hush of sleep;
Yet, when he smiles, the hand he draws
Athwart his grinning jaws—
Faintly the thin bones rattle, and—There, there;
Hearken how my bells in the air
Drive away care! . . .

Nay, but a dream I had
Of a world all mad.
Not simple happy mad like me,
Who am mad like an empty scene
Of water and willow tree,
Where the wind hath been;
But that foul Satan-mad,
Who rots in his own head,
And counts the dead,
Not honest one—and two—
But for the ghosts they were,
Brave, faithful, true,
When, head in air,
In Earth's clear green and blue
Heaven they did share
With beauty who bade them there. . . .

There, now! Death goes—
Mayhap I've wearied him.
Ay, and the light doth dim,
And asleep's the rose,
And tired Innocence
In dreams is hence. . . .
Come, Love, my lad,
Nodding that drowsy head,
'Tis time thy prayers were said!

WALTER DE LA MARE

1918

120

Reunion in War

THE windmill in his smock of white
Stared from his little crest,
Like a slow smoke was the moonlight
As I went like one possessed

Where the glebe path makes shortest way;
The stammering wicket swung.
I passed amid the crosses grey
Where opiate yew-boughs hung.

The bleached grass shuddered into sighs,
The dogs that knew this moon
Far up were harrying sheep, the cries
Of hunting owls went on.

And I among the dead made haste
And over flat vault stones
Set in the path unheeding paced
Nor thought of those chill bones.

Thus to my sweetheart's cottage I,
Who long had been away,
Turned as the traveller turns adry
To brooks to moist his clay.

Her cottage stood like a dream, so clear
And yet so dark; and now
I thought to find my more than dear
And if she'd kept her vow.

Old house dog from his barrel came
  Without a voice, and knew
And licked my hand; all seemed the same
  To the moonlight and the dew.

By the white damson then I took
  The tallest osier wand
And thrice upon her casement strook,
  And she, so fair, so fond,

Looked out, and saw in wild delight
  And tiptoed down to me,
And cried in silent joy that night
  Beside the bullace tree.

O cruel time to take away,
  And worse to bring agen;
Why slept not I in Flanders clay
  With all the murdered men?

For I had changed, or she had changed,
  Though true loves both had been,
Even while we kissed we stood estranged
  With the ghosts of war between.

We had not met but a moment ere
  War baffled joy, and cried,
'Love's but a madness, a burnt flare;
  The shell's a madman's bride.'

. . . . . .

The cottage stood, poor stone and wood,
  Poorer than stone stood I;
Then from her kind arms moved in a mood
  As grey as the cereclothed sky.

1918

The roosts were stirred, each little bird
  Called fearfully out for day;
The church clock with his dead voice whirred
  As if he bade me stay

To trace with madman's fingers all
  The letters on the stones
Where thick beneath the twitch roots crawl
  In dead men's envied bones.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

121

Remorse

LOST in the swamp and welter of the pit,
  He flounders off the duck-boards; only he knows
Each flash and spouting crash,—each instant lit
When gloom reveals the streaming rain. He goes
Heavily, blindly on. And, while he blunders,
'Could anything be worse than this?'—he wonders,
Remembering how he saw those Germans run,
Screaming for mercy among the stumps of trees:
Green-faced, they dodged and darted: there was one
Livid with terror, clutching at his knees. . . .
Our chaps were sticking 'em like pigs . . . 'O hell!'
He thought—'there's things in war one dare not tell
Poor father sitting safe at home, who reads
Of dying heroes and their deathless deeds.'

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

122

Kismet

OPAL fires in the Western sky
(For that which is written must ever be),
And a bullet comes droning, whining by,
To the heart of a sentry close to me.

For some go early, and some go late
(A dying scream on the evening air)
And who is there that believes in Fate
As a soul goes out in the sunset flare?

✠ R. B. MARRIOTT-WATSON

123

Sunset

SICKLE moon and smouldering star,
Beauty burning in the west;
Where is he that I loved best?

Beauty burning in the west,
Lo, an iron ache called War
Gathers him to her stark breast.

Sickle moon and smouldering star—
All the soul hath she possess'd
Of the love that I loved best.

Like a King he takes his rest,
Past all loves and dreams that are—
Sickle moon and smouldering star
Beauty burning in the west.

T. W. H. CROSLAND

1918

124

Going up the Line

O CONSOLATION and refreshment breathed
From the young Spring with apple-blossom wreathed,
Whose certain coming blesses
All life with token of immortality,
And from the ripe beauty and human tendernesses
And reconcilement and tranquillity
Which are the spirit of all things grown old.
For now that I have seen
The curd-white hawthorn once again
Break out on the new green,
And through the iron gates in the long blank wall
Have viewed across a screen
Of rosy apple-blossom the grey spire
And low red roofs and humble chimney-stacks,
And stood in spacious courtyards of old farms,
And heard green virgin wheat sing to the breeze,
And the drone of ancient worship rise and fall
In the dark church, and talked with simple folk
Of farm and village, dwelling near the earth,
Among earth's ancient elemental things:
I can with heart made bold
Go back into the ways of ruin and death
With step unflagging and with quiet breath,
For drawn from the hidden Spirit's deepest well
I carry in my soul a power to quell
All ills and terrors such as these can hold.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

125

The King's Messengers

THERE'S a stir within the City, there's a throng before the gate,
For the last long cruise is over, and the shipwrecked sailors wait
While St. Peter reads their records, none too closely now and then,
As a fisherman who's trodden in the paths of sailor men.

And recalls again the story from his Galilean home
Of a ship, and one who doubted, though his Master bade him come,
As he reads anew, in wonder, for the tale is of a sort
That concerns the lost and missing, crews that never came to port.

Bringing bales of wool from Sydney, fetching fruit and frozen meat,
Crews of ships that sank defenceless with their freights of golden wheat,
Red Cross ships and Channel steamers, tramps that toiled along the coast,
Most content upon their errands where the perils lurked the most.

Was there lack of food or raiment, was there sickness, pain, or need?
Where the cry went up for succour, there the messengers would speed,
Never asking whose the summons, though the daily call were plain
As—the sound of many waters—as the voice they hear again:

For the tidings spread and echo, to the City's farthest ends,
'Inasmuch as they have done it to the least of these My
friends,
Be it counted Royal Service'; and with never let or ban
Will the City gates stand open to the Merchant Sailor Man.

R. A. Hopwood

126

Destroyers

THROUGH the dark night
And the fury of battle
Pass the destroyers in showers of spray.
As the Wolf-pack to the flank of the cattle,
We shall close in on them—shadows of grey.
In from ahead,
Through shell-flashes red,
We shall come down to them, after the Day.
Whistle and crash
Of salvo and volley
Round us and into us while we attack.
Light on our target they'll flash in their folly,
Splitting our ears with the shrapnel-crack.
Fire as they will,
We'll come to them still,
Roar as they may at us—Back—Go Back!
White though the sea
To the shell-flashes foaming,
We shall be there at the death of the Hun.
Only we pray for a star in the gloaming
(Light for torpedoes and none for a gun).
Lord—of Thy Grace
Make it a race,
Over the sea with the night to run.

'Klaxon'

127

Submarines

WHEN the breaking wavelets pass all sparkling to the sky,
When beyond their crests we see the slender masts go by,
When the glimpses alternate in bubbles white and green,
And funnels grey against the sky show clear and fair between,
When the word is passed along—'Stern and beam and bow'—
'Action stations fore and aft—all torpedoes now!'
When the hissing tubes are still, as if with bated breath
They waited for the word to loose the silver bolts of death,
When the Watch beneath the Sea shall crown the great Desire,
And hear the coughing rush of air that greets the word to fire,
We'll ask for no advantage, Lord—but only we would pray
That they may meet this boat of ours upon their outward way.

'KLAXON'

128

Brothers of the Sea

SEA-WEARY, Argonauts, beaching their barque,
Greeted their brothers with salty throats;
Noah leant out of his painted Ark,
Crying, 'Ho! My sons!' to the Oilskin Coats,

1918

Peter the Fisherman taking notes
Added, smiling against his will,
'One old cruiser, two ferry boats—
Vindictive, *Iris*, and *Daffodil!*'

Quoth the fair-haired Vikings, reckless and stark,
'*We* stirred the mud of our islands' moats!
We, too, went pirating into the dark
When we were sowing our wild sea-oats!'
'Nay, pirates are numbered among the goats!'
Cried the Pilgrim Fathers, from over the hill,—
'On these the flag of the *Mayflower* floats—
Vindictive, *Iris*, and *Daffodil!*'

Nelson listened, and Drake said, 'Hark!'
And the English captains, as many as motes,
Chuckled like schoolboys over a lark—
'Now *these* are the lads that take our votes!'
From Land's End northward to John o' Groats
All round the coasts ran a sudden thrill
'O English rabbits will turn on stoats!—
Vindictive, *Iris*, and *Daffodil!*'

O Guarded Land, where each barge devotes
Its work-a-day self to thine honour still!
See History, laughing, as she quotes
Vindictive, *Iris*, and *Daffodil!*

J. H. Macnair

129

The Tide

To the Royal Naval Division

THIS is a last year's map;
I know it all so well,
Stream and gully and trench and sap,
Hamel and all that hell;
See where the old lines wind;
It seems but yesterday
We left them many a league behind
And put the map away.

'Never again,' we said,
'Shall we sit in the Kentish Caves;
Never again will the night-mules tread
Over the Beaucourt graves;
They shall have Peace,' we dreamed—
'Peace and the quiet sun,'
And over the hills the French folk streamed
To live in the land we won.

But the Bosch has Beaucourt now;
It is all as it used to be—
Airmen peppering Thiépval brow,
Death at the Danger Tree;
The tired men bring their tools
And dig in the old holes there;
The great shells spout in the Ancre pools,
The lights go up from Serre.

And the regiment came, they say,
Back to the selfsame land
And fought like men in the same old way
Where the cookers used to stand;

1918

And I know not what they thought
  As they passed the Puisieux Road
And over the ground where FREYBERG fought
  The tide of the grey men flowed.

But I think they did not grieve,
  Though they left by the old Bosch line
Many a cross they loathed to leave,
  Many a mate of mine;
I know that their eyes were brave,
  I know that their lips were stern,
For these went back at the seventh wave,
  But they wait for the tide to turn.

A. P. HERBERT

130

Nox Mortis

THE afternoon
  Flutters and dies:
The fairy moon
  Burns in the skies
As they grow darker, and the first stars shine
On Night's rich mantle—purple like warm wine.

On each white road
  Begins to crawl
The heavy toad:
  The night-birds call,
And round the trees the swift bats flit and wheel,
While from the barns the rats begin to steal.

VALOUR AND VISION

So now must I,
  Bird of the night,
Towards the sky
  Make wheeling flight,
And bear my poison o'er the gloomy land,
And let it loose with hard unsparing hand.

The chafers boom
  With whirring wings,
And haunt the gloom
  Which twilight brings—
So in nocturnal travel do I wail
As through the night the wingèd engines sail.

Death, Grief, and Pain
  Are what I give.
O that the slain
  Might live—might live!
I know them not, for I have blindly killed,
And nameless hearts with nameless sorrow filled.

Thrice cursèd War
  Which bids that I
Such death should pour
  Down from the sky.
O, Star of Peace, rise swiftly in the East
That from such slaying men may be released.

PAUL BEWSHER

1918

131

The Birds of Steel

THIS apple-tree, that once was green,
  Is now a thousand flowers in one!
And, with their bags strapped to their thighs,
  There's many a bee that comes for sweets,
To stretch each bag to its full size.

And when the night has grown a moon,
  And I lie half-asleep in bed,
I hear those bees again—ah no,
  It is the birds of steel, instead,
Seeking their innocent prey below.

Man-ridden birds of steel, unseen,
  That come to drop their murdering lime
On any child or harmless thing
  Before the early morning time:
Up, nearer to God, they fly and sing.

W. H. Davies

132

It's Rose-time here . . .

IT 'S rose-time here . . .
  How could the Spring
Be the same merry thing?
How could she sparkle April's posy-ring
Upon the finger of this widowed year?

How could she bring
Her gauds so pitilessly near?
How could she bear
To lead the pomp of May,
The primings and the promises of June
So near, so soon,
In the old happy way?
How could she dare
To prick the eyes of Grief
With mockeries of returning bud and leaf?
How could she wear
Such coloured broideries
Beside the tattered garments of despair?
Tenting the hills with April's canopies,
Setting the tulips' spears . . .
How could she keep her tourneys through such tears?

She did not care . . .
The roses are as beautiful this year.
The lily never doffed
One golden plume, nor did the may renounce
One thrilling splendour, nor wear one pearl less.
She has not grieved—even a little space—
For those who loved her once—
For those whom surely she must once have loved.

It's rose-time here . . .
While over there
Where all the roses of the world have blown
The blood is not yet dried upon their hair,
Their eyes have scarcely filmed against the moon,
The sun has not yet utterly gone out;
Almost the stained grass still
Is conscious of their breath—
Those heavenly roses, torn and tossed about
On the vast plains of Death.

1918

It's rose-time here . . .
(How I shall always hate the Spring
For being such a calm, untroubled thing.)
While over there
Where there're no children left to pull
The few scared, ragged flowers,
All that was ours, and, God, how beautiful!
All, all, that once was ours
Lies faceless, mouthless, mire in mire,
So lost to all sweet semblance of desire
That we in those fields seeking desperately
One face long-lost to Love,—one face that lies
Only upon the breast of Memory—
Would never know it—even though we stood
Upon its breast, or crushed its dreadful eyes,
Would never find it—even the very blood
Is stamped into the horror of the mud:
Something that mad men trample under foot
In the narrow trench—for these things are not men—
Things shapeless, sodden, mute
Beneath the monstrous limber of the guns;
Those things that loved us once . . .
Those that were ours, but never ours again.

It's rose-time here . . .

MURIEL STUART

133

August 1918

(*In a French Village*)

I HEAR the tinkling of the cattle bell
In the broad stillness of the afternoon;
High in the cloudless haze the August moon
Is pallid as the phantom of a shell.

A girl is drawing water from a well;
I hear the clatter of her wooden shoen;
Two mothers to their sleeping babies croon;
And the hot village feels the drowsy spell.

Sleep child, the Angel of Death his wings has spread;
His engines scour the land, the sea, the sky;
And all the weapons of Hell's armoury
Are ready for the blood that is their bread;
And many a thousand men to-night must die,
So many that they will not count the dead.

MAURICE BARING

134

Recovery

WHEN this so bitter tide
Shall turn and ebb to the waste whence it came,
The world, like a wrecked ship shorn of her pride,
A battered ship, tipped on a riddled side,
A shattered ship, shall ride
From storm to port, bankrupt of all but shame.

In that dark dawn all we
As lost mariners shall reel crazily
On a new earth, grown stranger than the sea.
As drowned men shall we come,
All pale, all sick, all dumb,
(But some, oh, some
Shall come not even thus, so dumb they be).

1918

We'll have no words to string, no tales to tell
Of the unutterable
Black dreams dreamt in the drifting deeps of hell.
But little things of earth
Shall stab us through with mirth—
Street lamps, each like a new-sprung celandine,
White daisies and red wine,
And small wise stars that shiver and blink and shine.

So, bankrupt of hope and blind
To faith and love, we'll find,
We, even we, joy in things small and kind.
Though it lie drowned, the world we dreamt we knew,
—Oh, though no dream be true—
We shall cry and laugh, as sailors and children do.

Rose Macaulay

135

A Dirge of Victory

LIFT not thy trumpet, Victory, to the sky,
Nor through battalions nor by batteries blow,
But over hollows full of old wire go,
Where among dregs of war the long-dead lie
With wasted iron that the guns passed by
When they went eastwards like a tide at flow;
There blow thy trumpet that the dead may know,
Who waited for thy coming, Victory.

It is not we that have deserved thy wreath.
They waited there among the towering weeds:

The deep mud burned under the thermite's breath,
And winter cracked the bones that no man heeds:
Hundreds of nights flamed by: the seasons passed:
And thou hast come to them, at last, at last!

LORD DUNSANY

136

The English Graves

WERE I that wandering citizen whose city is the world,
I would not weep for all that fell before the flags were furled;
I would not let one murmur mar the trumpets volleying forth
How God grew weary of the kings, and the cold hell in the north.
But we whose hearts are homing birds have heavier thoughts of home,
Though the great eagles burn with gold on Paris or on Rome,
Who stand beside our dead and stare, like seers at an eclipse,
At the riddle of the island tale and the twilight of the ships.

For these were simple men that loved, with hands and feet and eyes,
Whose souls were humbled to the hills and narrowed to the skies,
The hundred little lands within one little land that lie,
Where Severn seeks the sunset isles or Sussex scales the sky.

And what is theirs, though banners blow on Warsaw risen
again,
Or ancient laughter walks in gold through the vineyards
of Lorraine,
Their dead are marked on English stones, their loves on
English trees,
How little is the prize they win, how mean a coin for
these—
How small a shrivelled laurel-leaf lies crumpled here and
curled:
They died to save their country and they only saved the
world.

G. K. CHESTERTON

137

The Trust

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises,
but having seen them afar off.'—*Heb.* xi, 13.

THEY trusted God—Unslumbering and unsleeping.
He sees and sorrows for a world at war,
His ancient covenant securely keeping,
And these had seen His promise from afar,
That through the pain, the sorrow, and the sinning,
That righteous Judge the issue should decide
Who ruleth over all from the beginning—
And in that faith they died.

They trusted England—Scarce the prayer was spoken
Ere they beheld what they had hungered for,
A mighty country with its ranks unbroken,
A city built in unity once more;

Freedom's best champion, girt for yet another
And mightier enterprise for Right defied,
A land whose children live to serve their Mother
And in that faith they died.

And us they trusted; we the task inherit,
The unfinished task for which their lives were spent;
But leaving us a portion of their spirit
They gave their witness and they died content.
Full well they knew they could not build without us
That better country, faint and far descried,
God's own true England; but they did not doubt us—
And in that faith they died.

C. A. ALINGTON

138

Gallipoli

Qui procul hinc qui ante diem perierunt.

YE unforgotten, that for a great dream died,
Whose failing sense darkened on peaks unwon,
Whose souls went forth upon the wine-dark tide
To seas beyond the sun.
Far off, far off, but ours and England's yet,
Now she has conquered! Live again and let
The clamouring trumpets break oblivion!

Not as we dreamed, nor as you strove to do,
The strait is cloven, the crag is made our own;
The salt grey herbs have withered over you,
The stars of Spring gone down.
And your long loneliness has lain unstirred
By touch of home, unless some migrant bird
Flashed eastward from the white cliffs to the brown.

1918

Hard by the nameless dust of Argive men,
Remembered and remote, like theirs of Troy,
Your sleep has been, nor can ye wake again
To any cry of joy;
Summers and snows have melted on the waves,
And past the noble silence of your graves
The merging waters narrow and deploy.

But not in vain, not all in vain, thank God
All that you were and all you might have been
Was given to the cold effacing sod,
Unstrewn with garlands green;
The valour and the vision that were yours
Lie not with broken spears and fallen towers,
With glories perishable of all things seen.

Children of one dear land and every sea,
At last fulfilment comes—the night is o'er;
Now, as at Samothrace, swift Victory,
Walks winged on the shore;
And England, deathless Mother of the dead,
Gathers, with lifted eyes and unbowed head,
Her silent sons into her arms once more.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

139

Envoi

HOW shall I say good-bye to you, wonderful, terrible days,
If I should live to live and leave 'neath an alien soil
You, my men, who taught me to walk with a smile in the ways
Of the valley of shadows, taught me to know you and love you, and toil
Glad in the glory of fellowship, happy in misery, strong
In the strength that laughs at its weakness, laughs at its sorrows and fears,
Facing the world that was not too kind with a jest and a song?
What can the world hold afterwards worthy of laughter or tears?

EDWARD DE STEIN

140

Vision

IS it because that lad is dead
My eyes are doing a double duty,
And drink, for his sake and in his stead,
Twice their accustomed draught of beauty;

Or does the intoxicating Earth
Ferment in me with stronger leaven,
Because, for seeing the year's rebirth,
He loans me eyes that look on heaven?

FRANK SIDGWICK

1918

141

'Now to be Still and Rest . . .'

NOW to be still and rest, while the heart remembers
All that it learned and loved in the days long past,
To stoop and warm our hands at the fallen embers,
Glad to have come to the long way's end at last.

Now to awake, and feel no regret at waking,
Knowing the shadowy days are white again,
To draw our curtains and watch the slow dawn breaking
Silver and grey on English field and lane.

Now to fulfil our dreams, in woods and meadows
Treading the well-loved paths—to pause and cry
'So, even so I remember it'—seeing the shadows
Weave on the distant hills their tapestry.

Now to rejoice in children and join their laughter,
Tuning our hearts once more to the fairy strain,
To hear our names on voices we love, and after
Turn with a smile to sleep and our dreams again.

Then—with a new-born strength, the sweet rest over,
Gladly to follow the great white road once more,
To work with a song on our lips and the heart of a lover,
Building a city of peace on the wastes of war.

P. H. B. Lyon

142

Home Coming

HERE, by God's kindly grace
Am I not blest
To come back to the place
That I love best,
And after weary days
In the world's press
Once more to walk the ways
Of quietness?

How sweet when I am tired
And long for sleep,
To know all I desired
Is mine to keep—
The hills I love, around
My grave, the streams
To fill with far-off sound
My happy dreams.

I shall be full of rest
In the soft fold
Of earth's green garment drest.
And as of old,
On me the dawn shall break
The sun set slow,
And though I may not wake
Yet I shall know.

R. G. T. COVENTRY

1918

143

The Lost Traveller's Dream

MEN say amid the hosts of hidden morrows hides
A real day lit with sunshine, windblown and dew-drops pearled,
A day of gentle dreams and magic flowing tides,
When dead shall lie the hates and sorrows of the world.

Alas! 'tis but a flame that falters on the wind,
A little spark of hope quenched in the world's dark wars,
A phantom light that haunts the sleep of men born blind,
A shipwrecked sailor's dream of lost and perilous shores.

Yet ever in the twilight our hearts throw off their load,
And fearless dreams with coloured wings in rapture shine,
Yea, you may meet the gods on any mountain road,
And every labourer knows the heart of earth divine.

Shall not the starlit Beauty, leaning from the hills,
Come down at last with her great winds for our release?
And lay cold hands of quiet on hot human wills,
And move the souls of men to Mercy and to Peace.

EVA GORE-BOOTH

144

The Reawakening

GREEN in light are the hills, and a calm wind flowing
Filleth the void with a flood of the fragrance of Spring;
Wings in this mansion of life are coming and going,
Voices of unseen loveliness carol and sing.

Coloured with buds of delight the boughs are swaying,
Beauty walks in the woods, and wherever she rove
Flowers from wintry sleep, her enchantment obeying,
Stir in the deep of her dream, reawaken to love.

Oh, now begone sullen care—this light is my seeing;
I am the palace, and mine are its windows and walls;
Daybreak is come, and life from the darkness of being
Springs, like a child from the womb, when the lonely one calls.

WALTER DE LA MARE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND NOTES

[*The numbers refer to the poems.*]

The quotation on the title-page is taken from *Forlorn Adventurers*, by A. L. Jenkins. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

1. *The Four Years*, by Laurence Binyon. (Elkin Mathews.)
2. *The Years Between*, by Rudyard Kipling. (Methuen.)
3. *Stone Trees*, by John Freeman. (Selwyn and Blount.)
4. *A Salute from the Fleet*, by Alfred Noyes. (Methuen.)
5. *Theophanies*, by Evelyn Underhill. (J. M. Dent.)
6. *A Muse at Sea*, by E. Hilton Young. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
7. *Collected Poems*, by Thomas Hardy. (Macmillan.)
8. *Days of Destiny*, by Col. Lord Gorell. (Longmans.)
9. *To the Vanguard*, by Beatrix Brice. (Bickers and Sons.) This poem appeared anonymously in the "In Memoriam" column of *The Times* on All Souls' Day, 1916 (the second anniversary of the crisis of the first Battle of Ypres). It has been set as a choral work by Arthur Sullivan, and was the origin of the First Seven Divisions Commemoration held in the Albert Hall in December 1917.
10. *St. George's Day*, by Henry Newbolt. (John Murray.)
11. *Poems*, by G. K. Chesterton. (Burns and Oates.)
12. MSS.
13. *The Holy War*, by Katharine Tynan. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
14. *War Poems and Other Verses*, by R. E. Vernède. (Heinemann.) The author, Lieut. R. E. Vernède, The Rifle Brigade, was killed in Action on 9 April 1917.

15. *War Time*, by OWEN SEAMAN. (Constable.) Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, born 1832. Died on Service at the Front, 14 November 1914.

16. *The Volunteer and Other Poems*, by HERBERT ASQUITH. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

17. *The Four Years*, by LAURENCE BINYON. (Elkin Mathews.)

18. *Poems of To-Day*. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

19. *Coal and Candlelight*, by HELEN PARRY EDEN. (John Lane.)

20. *The Flower of Youth*, by KATHARINE TYNAN. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

21. *The Westminster Gazette*, 1914.

22. *Collected Poems*, by A.E. (Macmillan.)

23. *Stone Trees*, by JOHN FREEMAN. (Selwyn and Blount.)

24. *The Spectator*, 1914.

25. *The Four Years*, by LAURENCE BINYON. (Elkin Mathews.)

26. *Collected Poems*, by RUPERT BROOKE. (Sidgwick and Jackson.) Sub-Lieutenant Rupert Brooke died in the Ægean Sea, 23 April 1915.

27. *Collected Poems*, by JAMES ELROY FLECKER. (Martin Secker.) The author wrote this poem of himself, dying of consumption in Switzerland.

28. *The Times*, 1914.

29. *Swords and Ploughshares*, by JOHN DRINKWATER. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

30. *War Poems and Other Verses*, by R. E. VERNÈDE. (Heinemann.) See also No. 14.

31. *Poems*, by IOLO ANEURIN WILLIAMS. (Macmillan.)

32. *The Times*, 1915. Captain the Hon. Julian Grenfell, D.S.O., Royal Dragoons, was mortally wounded on 27 May 1915. This poem was sent in a letter dated 30 April 1915, from near Ypres, with the words, "Here is a poem, if you can read it—I rather like it!"

33. *Poems* 1914-1919, by MAURICE BARING. (Martin Secker.)

34. *Three Hills*, by Everard Owen. (Sidgwick and Jackson.) The Three Hills are Harrow, Hill 60, and Calvary.
35. *The Harrovian*, 1915.
36. *King Albert's Book*.
37. *St. George's Day*, by Henry Newbolt. (John Murray.)
38. *Blackwood's Magazine*.
39. *Ardours and Endurances*, by Robert Nichols. (Chatto and Windus.)
40. *Poems*, by Elinor Jenkins. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
41. *The Times*, 1915. This poem was written on the way to Gallipoli; the author, Lieut. Nowell Oxland, 6th Border Regt., was killed in Action at Suvla Bay on 9 August 1915.
42. *Friends*, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. (Elkin Mathews.)
43. *Poems*, by Geoffrey Dearmer. (Heinemann.)
44. *Songs and Chanties*, by C. Fox Smith. (Elkin Mathews.)
45. *The Hunter and Other Poems*, by W. J. Turner. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
46. *Blackwood's Magazine*.
47. *Over the Brazier*, by Robert Graves. (The Poetry Bookshop.)
48. *Verse and Prose in Peace and War*, by William Noel Hodgson. (John Murray.) Lieut. William Noel Hodgson, M.C., Devon Regt., was killed in Action on 1 July 1916.
49. *The Saturday Westminster*.
50. *Marlborough and Other Poems*, by Charles Hamilton Sorley. (Cambridge University Press.) The author fell in Action on 13 October 1915. This sonnet was found in his kit, sent home from France after his death.
51. *Collected Poems*, by Thomas Hardy. (Macmillan.)
52. *Battle*, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. (Elkin Mathews.)
53. *On Heaven and Other Poems*, by Ford Madox Ford. (John Lane.)

54. *Songs of Youth and War*, by Capt. P. H. B. Lyon, M.C. (Erskine Macdonald.)

55. *The Omega and Other Poems*, by Edward Shillito. (Blackwell.)

56. *Flower of Youth*, by Katharine Tynan. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

57. *A Gloucestershire Lad*, by F. W. Harvey. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

58. *Poems*, by Alan Seeger. (Constable.) The author, an American Subject who enlisted in the Foreign Legion, was mortally wounded on 4 July 1916.

59. *Collected Poems*, by T. W. H. Crosland. (Martin Secker.)

60. *The Spectator*, 1915.

61. *In the Battle Silences*, by F. G. Scott. (Constable.)

62. *The Times*, 1915. Captain the Hon. Robert Palmer, Hampshire Regiment, died in the Turkish Camp of wounds received on the Tigris on 21 January 1916.

63. *In Flanders Fields*, by Lt.-Col. John McCrae. (Hodder and Stoughton.) Lt.-Col. John McCrae, M.D., Canadian Contingent, died on Service at No. 14 General Hospital, B.E.F., on 28 January 1918. His famous poem, "In Flanders Fields" was first published in *Punch*.

64. *The Times*, 1916.

65. *Poems*, by Alan Seeger. (Constable.) See No. 58.

66. *The Times*, 1916, and in *Edward Wyndham Tennant*, a Memoir, by Lady Glenconner. (John Lane.) Lieutenant the Hon. Edward Wyndham Tennant, Grenadier Guards, was killed in Action on 22 September 1916.

67. *Poems* 1916-1918, by Francis Brett Young. (Collins.) Written with the B.E.F., Morago-Opuni, German East Africa.

68. *The Times*, 1916.

69. MSS.

70. *Poems* 1916-1918, by Francis Brett Young. (Collins.)

71. *The Queen of China*, by Edward Shanks. (Martin Secker.)

72. *The Old Way*, by R. A. Hopwood. (John Murray.)

73. *October*, by Robert Bridges. (Heinemann.)

74. *Verse and Prose in Peace and War*, by William Noel Hodgson. (John Murray.) See also No. 48.

75. *Poems and Rhymes*, by Jeffery Day. (Sidgwick and Jackson.) This poem was first published in *The Cornhill*. The author, Flight-Commander Jeffery Day, R.N.A.S., was shot down by six German aircraft, which he attacked single-handed out at sea, on 27 February 1918.

76. *From an Outpost*, by Leslie Coulson. (Erskine MacDonald.) Sergeant Leslie Coulson was killed in action on 7 October 1916.

77. These lines were written at Kastamurin, in Asia Minor, while the author, Captain F. J. Patmore, 7th Hampshire Regiment, was in a prison camp after the capture of Kut-el-Amara.

78. *Collected Poems*, by Francis Ledwidge. (Herbert Jenkins.) Francis Ledwidge, Royal Irish Fusiliers, was killed in Action on 31 July 1917.

79. *Magpies in Picardy*, by T. P. Cameron Wilson. (The Poetry Bookshop.) Captain T. P. Cameron Wilson, Sherwood Foresters, was killed in France on 23 March 1918.

80. *The Spectator*.

81. *Jesus of the Scars*, by Edward Shillito. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

82. *Poems from "Punch,"* by permission of the Proprietors.

83. *In War Time*, by May Wedderburn Cannan. (Blackwell.)

84. See No. 78.

85. *Olton Pools*, by John Drinkwater. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

86. *Fairies and Fusiliers*, by Robert Graves. (Heinemann.)

87. *Poems*, 1914-1919, by Maurice Baring. (Martin Secker.)

88. *Poems*, by J. C. Squire. (Martin Secker.)

89. *The Poems of Alice Meynell.* (Burns and Oates.)

90. *Argonaut and Juggernaut*, by Osbert Sitwell. (Chatto and Windus.)

91. *Poems by Wilfred Owen.* (Chatto and Windus.) The author, Captain Wilfred Owen, The Manchester Regiment, was killed in Action on 4 November 1918 whilst trying to get his men over the Sambre Canal.

92. *Images of War*, by Richard Aldington. (Allen and Unwin.)

93. See No. 45. This poem was written in 1915, and was a prophecy of what happened in England in 1917.

94. *Mesopotamia*, by J. Griffyth Fairfax. (John Murray.) This poem was written on the Upper Euphrates between the Ramedi and Hit operations.

95. See No. 94. Written on the evening of the funeral in Bagdad, at which the author was present. This poem was read at the Funeral Service held by the XIIIth Division, formerly commanded by General Maude.

96. See No. 94.

97. See No. 78.

98. *Later Poems*, by W. B. Yeats. (Macmillan.)

99. *Whin*, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. (Macmillan.)

100. *The War Poems of Siegfried Sassoon.* (Heinemann.)

101. *Poems*, by J. C. Squire. (Martin Secker.)

102. *Collected Poems*, by Edward Thomas. (Selwyn and Blount.) The author held a commission in the R.G.A., and was killed in the engagement on Vimy Ridge on 9 April 1917.

103. See No. 102.

104. *Motley*, by Walter de la Mare. (Constable.)

105. *The Queen of China*, by Edward Shanks. (Martin Secker.)

106. *Punch.* This poem was written during the battle of the "Chemin des Dames" while the author was waiting to go over the top.

107. See No. 90.

108. MSS.

109. *The War Poems af Siegfried Sassoon.* (Heinemann.)

110. *Resentment*, by Alec Waugh. (Grant Richards.)

111. *Herb o' Grace*, by Katharine Tynan. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)

112. *The Heart of Peace and Other Poems*, by Laurence Housman. (Heinemann.)

113. *Nigel and Other Poems*, by Alys Fane Trotter. (Burns and Oates.)

114. *Whin*, by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. (Macmillan.)

115. See No. 91.

116. *Last Poems*, by A. E. Housman. (Grant Richards.) Written for the third anniversary of the Battle of Ypres.

117. *Shylock reasons with Mr. Chesterton*, by Humbert Wolfe. (Blackwell.)

118. See No. 89.

119. *Motley and Other Poems*, by Walter de la Mare. (Constable.)

120. *The Shepherd*, by Edmund Blunden. (Cobden Sanderson.)

121. See No. 109.

122. *The Observer*, 1918. Lieut. R. B. Marriott-Watson, Royal Irish Rifles, was killed in Action 24 March 1918.

123. MSS.

124. *The Buzzards*, by Martin Armstrong. (Martin Secker.)

125. *The Secret of the Ships*, by R. A. Hopwood. (John Murray.)

126, 127. *On Patrol*, by "Klaxon." (William Blackwood.)

128. *The Saturday Westminster.*

129. *The Bomber Gipsy*, by A. P. Herbert.

130. *The Bombing of Bruges*, by Paul Bewsher. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

131. *Forty New Poems*, by W. H. Davies. (Jonathan Cape.)

132. *The Cockpit of Idols*, by Muriel Stuart. (Methuen.)

133. *Poems* 1914-1919, by Maurice Baring. (Martin Secker.)
134. *Three Days*, by Rose Macaulay. (Constable.)
135. *The Times*, 1918.
136. *St. Barbara*, by G. K. Chesterton. (Cecil Palmer.)
137. *The Times*, 1918.
138. *Beasts Royal*, by Dorothy Margaret Stuart. (Clement Ingleby.) This poem celebrates the return of the British Fleet to Gallipoli after the Armistice.
139. *More Verse*, by F.S. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
140. *Poets in Picardy*, by E. de Stein. (John Murray.)
141. *The Spectator*.
142. *Country Life*, 1918.
143. *Broken Glory*, by Eva Gore-Booth. (Maunsel and Roberts.)
144. *Motley*, by Walter de la Mare. (Constable.)

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HOPKINSON

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